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Thierry Stern

President, Patek Philippe









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# The Torch Passes

his issue of *WatchTime* is the last produced under the direction of Wolfgang Blum, Blum, simply put, is WatchTime's founding father, its first and only publisher. He is the man Ebner Verlag, Watch Time's parent company, based in Ulm, Germany, tapped in 1999 to launch a watch magazine in the United States. Now, after 13 years in the United States, Blum has decided to return to his native Germany. His successor is Dominik Grau, a native of Munich, Germany, who has moved to New York and taken the torch passed by Blum.

Blum's decision to return home was not an easy one. WatchTime has been his baby. He started the magazine from scratch, with a phone at his residence in Philadelphia and a staff of one: himself. Since then, he has presided over 73 regular issues of the magazine, more than a dozen special issues, as well as annual Buyer's Guides and other publications. His achievements are too many to chronicle here. They can be summarized in the latest sales statistics from Barnes & Noble: Of the 12 watch magazines Barnes & Noble sells, WatchTime is #1 by far. Of the 5,000-plus magazines B&N sells, WatchTime is #442. No other watch magazine is in the top 800.

Credit for this belongs to Blum. He insisted on a reader-oriented editorial policy rather than the far more common advertiser-oriented one.

He believed that readers want — and the watch world needs - a fair, independent, and objective voice. Through the sharp ups and sharper downs of the U.S. economy over the past dozen years, and through the new-technology turmoil that has roiled the media world, Blum steered WatchTime with cool, calm aplomb. During the financial calamity of 2009, when newspapers and magazines were forced to reduce staff, Blum protected his team. In fact, he expanded it to turn a WatchTime weakness into a strength. A month after the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008, he hired Mike Disher as Watch Time's online editor. Blum wanted Watch Time to be a pioneer in new media. Blum and Disher not only created a new, vastly improved WatchTime website, they made WatchTime the world's first watch magazine with an iPad application, with audio, video, and numerous other enhancements.

Blum collaborated with noted watch expert and collector Jeff Kingston on another innovation: WatchTime's "Inside Basel/Geneva" events for watch aficionados. Blum and Kingston created a new forum for watch collectors and collector brands to meet. Since they began in 2005, the events have gone from strength to strength, as evidenced by the more than 300 people and 29 watch brands at the New York IBG event in September.

Speaking personally, in 34 years of covering the watch world, I have worked on four magazines. I have been editor-in-chief on three of them, working closely with the publisher. Wolfgang Blum is the finest publisher I have ever seen. No one worked harder, smarter or better than he did. We owe him much.

Dominik Grau will build on Blum's legacy. Grau is a journalist and manager who moved from print to specialize in online media in Germany. Previously he was a director at the German subsidiary of Boston-based IDG (International Data Group), the world's largest technology media, events, and research company. As managing director of Ebner Publishing International, Inc. in New York, he will not only serve as WatchTime publisher, but also oversee a number of new initiatives that Ebner Verlag plans for *WatchTime* in the U.S. and beyond. He will be the architect of what we hope and expect will be a bigger, better WatchTime -*WatchTime* 2.0, so to speak. More on that later. For now, we give Dominik the warmest of welcomes and Wolfgang the fondest of farewells.

Joe Thompson







Breguet Boutiques opening Fall 2011 in Las Vegas and Miami

# ONTENTS

WatchTime, November-December 2011







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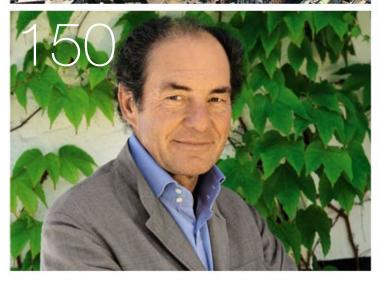
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#### SPORTS WATCH SHOWCASE

Dozens of new watches for every sport you can think of

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EVERY ROLEX IS MADE FOR GREATNESS. THE COSMOGRAPH DAYTONA, INTRODUCED IN 1963, WAS DESIGNED TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF PROFESSIONAL RACE CAR DRIVERS AND QUICKLY EARNED ITS ICONIC STATUS. WITH ITS PATENTED CHRONOGRAPH MECHANISM AND BEZEL WITH TACHOMETRIC SCALE, IT ALLOWS DRIVERS TO PERFECTLY MEASURE ELAPSED CIRCUIT TIME AND CALCULATE AVERAGE SPEED.

#### THE COSMOGRAPH DAYTONA











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Rare and exclusive bottles for well-capitalized connoisseurs

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Are we surprised Rolex signed Tiger Woods to a sponsorship deal? No. They should have done it a decade ago.

ON THE COVER: Breitling's Chronomat GMT. Photo by Nik Schölzel



Watch in black high-tech ceramic and 18K white gold, limited to 10 pieces. CHANEL RMT-10 calibre with manual winding exclusively designed for CHANEL by Renaud et Papi Manufacture (APRP SA). High-tech ceramic mainplate.

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#### "IT WAS NOT ALBERT POTTER WHO HELPED DEVELOP THE INCLINED TOURBILLON BUT ANDREW POTTER."

#### HONG KONG'S CLOUT

I was intrigued by the Swiss watch export stats in the October issue ("See Ya, Watch Slump"). Hong Kong, an island of 426 square miles and seven million people, continues to buy more Swiss watches than any other country by a wide margin. Hong Kong is approximately one-fiftieth the size of the United States in terms of population, yet it out-buys the U.S. by almost two to one. Amazing! I'm sure economic and cultural factors play a part, but it is clear that folks in Hong Kong (and the Far East in general and Europe) love Swiss watches and are far ahead of the United States in this regard. Looking at it differently, there is plenty of room to grow in the U.S. market, provided economic conditions improve.

> David Elliott South Windsor, CT

Amazing is an apt description of Hong Kong's Swiss watch consumption. Two factors enable a place so small to punch above its weight. One is that it is an entrepôt, a distribution center for markets around Southeast Asia. Swiss companies ship watches to their subsidiaries in Hong Kong, which in turn deliver them to agents (retailers and wholesalers) elsewhere in the region. Although these watches are not sold to consumers in Hong Kong, they are recorded in Swiss data as exports to Hong Kong.

Secondly, Hong Kong is a Mecca for luxury shopping. Tourists from around the globe flock there to shop. These days the most avid shoppers there are from Mainland China, which borders Hong Kong. JT

#### NOT THAT A.H. POTTER

It was great to see Stephen Forsey's acknowledgment of the contribution of American watchmakers to the development of the inclined tourbillon in Norma Buchanan's article, "Mr. Tourbillon Man" in the June 2011 issue. Few recognize the importance of the developments made by watchmakers such as Potter. However, it was not Albert Potter who helped develop the inclined tourbillon but Andrew Potter. The confusion is understandable: the initials for both are the same: A.H. Potter. But Andrew lived and worked in Boston. Albert worked in New York, Cuba, Chicago, St. Paul and ultimately Geneva, where he produced some of his finest master-

pieces. But it was Andrew who experimented with the inclined angle of the tourbillon.

Similar acknowledgment is probably overdue for the contribution of American watchmakers to the co-axial development. Charles Fasoldt of New York patented, manufactured and marketed co-axial double-escape-wheel watches (and clocks). He was a contemporary of the Potters. Like Breguet, Robin, Daniels, Omega, and Oechslin, he creatively met the lubrication issues of the day. Like Daniels and Omega, he did it with a co-axial dual wheel.

Peter Willoughby St. Paul, MN

Thanks for this informative clarification. For the record, the Potter misidentification was WatchTime's error, not Stephen Forsey's. JT

#### SIXTIES CHIC

This letter is prompted by Mark Bernardo's article about classic designs in the October issue ("Classical Revival"). This photo [shown at left] is of my father's watch, commemorating his retirement from the jewelry business. He chose it upon retiring in 1965. If you did not see the name on the watch, I doubt you would attribute it to Rado given its modern products. The case and dial are solid gold. I wish my father were around to see what watches are like now, and the ones that I have collected.

Martin R. Gluck Dallas, TX

#### WHAT DOES "MEAN" MEAN?

I am a longtime, happy subscriber as well as a collector, but I need your assistance in understanding your watch tests. Can you please define "mean amplitude?"

Barry Weinstein Apopka, FL

The mean amplitude in our tests is the average of the balance's amplitude in the various positions in which the watch is timed on the Witschi timing machine. We calculate two mean amplitudes. One is the average of the two values measured when the average of the horizontal (i.e. dial up and dial down) positions. The other is the average of the four values when the watch is in the vertical (i.e. crown up, crown down, crown left and crown right) positions. IT

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# Powering the Turbines

Perrelet designates the Turbine watch as its leader model.

witzerland's Perrelet is known for its "double rotor" designs. One rotor is on the back of the watch, as usual, and another is located on the dial side, for all the world to see. Given the need to keep designs fresh and the watch industry's affinity for all things aeronautic, it was only natural for a Perrelet designer to hit upon the idea of adopting a turbine motif for the dial-side rotor. Thus, the Perrelet Turbine was launched at Baselworld 2009. Twelve titanium turbine rotor blades spin beneath the hands with each flick of the wrist, winding the watch and catching passing eyes.

The Turbine watch caught people's attention. Now Perrelet has made the watch its leader model. "Turbine is the face of Perrelet," says Michael Goldstein, president of Perrelet North America. The collection has nearly 30 different versions, including three new and unusual models.

Games of chance are a popular design theme of late, and into this game Perrelet deals the Turbine Poker. The stationary dial below the spinning turbine rotor is decorated with playing cards that are visible through the spaces between the rotor's blades. This is a fun concept, though the cards do not change or move; there are 12 of them, which does not correlate to any popular variation of poker. So, Perrelet invites us to reinvent poker by getting friends and family to guess which cards will be revealed when the spinning rotor stops. Is that roulette meets poker?

Three dials are available: on one, the winning combination is a pair of sevens. Another shows a pair of sevens and two royal flushes (one spades and one hearts). The third shows two full boats. The 44mm Poker case is in DLC-treated steel. To put one on your wrist, the ante is \$6,000.

The second new model is the Turbine XL America. The "XL" describes the watch's 50-mm case, and this model will be issued in a limited series of 777 pieces. The stars and stripes take center stage: Perrelet calls the design a deconstructed American flag, with 50 stars on blue fields, a total of 50, adorning selected indices and red and white stripes below the turbine rotor. Perrelet says that spinning the rotor makes the colors do a wild dance, performing endlessly varied random figures. You can take the flag for a spin for \$7,000.

The final iteration is the Turbine Golden Bullet, and gold accents abound, on the hands, the indices, the center of the rotor, and the dial beneath the spinning turbine blades. This is a piece Goldfinger would covet. If you want to become the man with the golden watch, this 44-mm watch will be issued in a limited series of 888 pieces, priced at \$6,000. The vodka martini is extra. - MIKE DISHER

The Turbine Poker (\$6,000)



The Turbine XL America (\$7,000)



The Turbine Golden Bullet (\$6,000)





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An example of a COSC certificate

# COSC Certs Rise

# With Economic Tide

As the economic crisis eased its hold on the Swiss watch industry last year, the number of chronometer certificates issued by COSC (Contrôle Officiel Suisse des Chronomètres) showed a healthy increase, growing 10 percent to 1,276,714. The number had plummeted 27 percent in 2009. As usual, nearly all the certificates (1,256,915) were awarded to mechanical movements; 19,799 went to quartz ones. Breitling, which has all of the movements it uses in its watches certified, accounted for three-quarters, or

14,740, of the quartz certificates issued.

The three brands receiving

the most certificates were the same as they have been for many years: Rolex, Omega and Breitling.

Rolex accounted for nearly half of all certificates, receiving 611,424 of them,

Omega nearly doubled its number from 2009, to 342,798. Breitling

about 4,000 more than the prior year.

received 13 percent more (122,649) than it did the year before. These three brands accounted for 84 percent of all certificates issued by COSC.

TAG Heuer, in the number four spot in 2009, fell to number seven last year because it received 65 percent fewer certificates than the year before (a total of 24,541). Chopard, with 34,254 certificates (versus 37,314 in 2009), rose to number four from number six. Certificates for Panerai declined 35 percent, to 26,291, but the brand held onto its number five spot.

Some other changes in the top 10 chronometer brands: Mido, which got

# Top Swiss Chronometer Producers, 2010

	Danad	Cartification
-	Brand	Certificates
1.	Rolex	611,424
2.	Omega	342,798
3.	Breitling	122,649
4.	Chopard	34,254
5.	Panerai	26,291
6.	Mido	25,384
7.	TAG Heuer	24,541
8.	Titoni	13,335
9.	Enicar	11,180
10.	Ball Watch	7,396
11.	Ernest Borel	6,341
12.	Zenith	5,194
13.	Corum	5,092
14.	Ulysse Nardin	5,035
15.	Chanel	4,345
16.	Ebel	2,236
17.	Rado	1,998
18.	Dolce & Gabbana	1,914
19.	Normana	1,870
20.	Carl F. Bucherer	1,821
21.	Montblanc	1,623
22.	Concord	1,524
23.	Ciribelli	1,510
24.	Bremont	1,499
25.	Certina	1,459
26.	Desco von Schultess	1,408
27.	Tissot	1,265
28.	S.T. Dupont	1,056
29.	Roger Dubuis	1.022
		1,022

Source: COSC







FIND YOUR TAG HEUER

1860 Edouard Heuer founded his workshop in the Swiss Jura.

1916 First mechanical stopwatch accurate to 1/100th of a second.

1969 First automatic chronograph.

2011 TAG Heuer CARRERA Heritage Calibre 16.



# Moonlite Int. Inc.

73-15 Broadway Jackson Heights, NY 718-803-0800 17.730 certificates in 2009, received 25,384 last year, an increase of 43 percent. Ball Watch (down 52 percent last year, to 7,396) fell to the 10th spot from eighth in 2009. Worth noting also is Ernest Borel, a brand recently returned to the United States, knocking on the door of the Top 10 in 11th place.

There were a few names on the 1,000plus-certificates list last year that were not there in 2009: Zenith (#12, with 5,194 certificates); Dolce & Gabbana (#18, 1,914); Normana (#19, 1,870); Ciribelli (#23, 1,510); Certina (#25, 1,459); Desco von Schultess (#26, 1,408); S.T. Dupont (#28, 1,056); and Roger Dubuis (#29, 1,022).

- NORMA BUCHANAN

Rolex has long been the top recipient of chronometer certificates from COSC. How may Rolex watches were certified 10 years ago?

In 2000, 635,209 Rolex watches received certificates, 23,785 more than last year. Nearly all movements used in Rolex-brand watches have been certified by COSC, so the number of certificates issued to the brand is a reliable indicator of its production, which the company does not disclose.



#### More Power To It





Rebellion's T-1000 watch has a world-record power reserve of more than 41 days.

The best way to break through the clutter of haute-horology marketing claims is to have the best, or fastest, or longest, ideally in an area where objective measurement is possible. Over the years, several brands have introduced mechanical watches with ever-longer power reserves as symbols of technical prowess. For decades, so-called "eight-day" watches reigned supreme in this domain. Most of these used long mainsprings in single barrels. Eventually watchmakers began designing movements with multiple winding barrels, and it was off to the races. Watches with power reserves of 10, 12, and even 15 days were introduced. In 2006, Jacob & Co. introduced the Quenttin, with a 31-day power reserve. In 2007, A. Lange & Söhne matched that with its Lange 31, with, as the name implies, 31 days of autonomy.

Today, a small company founded in 2008 claims the power-reserve title. Rebellion, based in Lonay, Switzerland, produces the T-1000, signifying an astounding 1,000-hour power reserve. That's 41.6 days. Some brands boast that you can take their watch off on Friday and it will still be running when you pick it up on Monday. With the T-1000, you can take it off on Thanksgiving and it should still be running on New Year's Day.

This amazing feat of longevity is achieved by combining no fewer than six mainspring barrels mounted vertically, three to a side, within the case. Winding this set-up with a standard crown would probably cause the owner physical distress, so Rebellion designed a clever lever system. When not in use, the lever sits flush on top of the case, integrated with the bezel. Unlocking the lever and pulling it up winds the barrels via a central shaft and two small chains, one on each side. A window in the side of the case reveals one of the barrels and the remaining power reserve.

The time is displayed on vertical rollers reminiscent of those Christophe Claret's DualTow. The 693part movement uses an inclined balance wheel with double hairsprings to release the power at a leisurely 18,000 vph, which contributes to the extended power reserve. All of this requires some room, and the case measures a substantial 46.7 mm x 46.9 mm x 19.5 mm. The T-1000 is priced at 105,000 Swiss francs in titanium, SF115,000 in black titanium DLC (diamond-like carbon). Rebellion does not quote prices in dollars, it says, because the price fluctuates daily due to currency swings. - MIKE DISHER





Bell & Ross combines 12 of its Radar watches (left) to make one unusual clock, the BR Twelve O'Clock (below, right).

To see it for the first time is to experience momentary confusion. After a few seconds you realize that you're looking at 12 watches mounted on winders in a large box. Some of the dials display deconstructed numbers like those the abstract artist Kazimir Malevich might see in a dream. Others display only unrecognizable shapes.

"It" is the BR Twelve O'Clock from Bell & Ross, a piece of high-concept art that tells time. Like much of modern art, the symbolism is in the eye of the beholder, but the creators say it represents the philosophical aspect of time, and its fleeting nature. How so?

Each of the 12 watches is a 46-mm Bell & Ross Radar with a reconfigured display. Each dial consists of three concentric disks, rotating at a different rate. On the Radar timepiece, each disk has a brightly-colored line, and as the disks rotate, the lines indicate the time. The center disk represents the seconds, the middle disk the hours, and the outer disk the minutes.

On the BR Twelve O'Clock, each of the watch dials bears a single, large digit — 1 through 12 — corresponding to an

hour of the day. Each number fills the three concentric dial disks. As the disks rotate, the numbers appear in various deconstructed states. Only when all three disks line up perfectly is the number on the dial perfectly formed. This perfectly formed state occurs twice each day, and lasts only a few seconds. So, during the course of a day, as each hour passes, the one, then the two, then the three will be perfectly formed, and when that happens, it signifies 1 o'clock, 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock, etc. There is no minute or seconds display. In the image below, the five is perfectly formed, so it's 5 o'clock.

Each of the 12 automatic watches is mounted on a battery-powered winder with push button operation, allowing the owner to enjoy a cord-free, constantly changing montage.

Only 12 BR Twelve O'Clocks will be produced. Given the limited production, the piece is not on display in any retail store. Bell & Ross says this piece will appeal to art collectors who also appreciate mechanical timepieces. This intersection of art and time is priced at \$88,000.

- MIKE DISHER



#### Who are Bell & Ross?

Bell & Ross gets its name from the first syllables of the last names of its founders, Bruno Belamich and Carlos Rosillo, two Frenchmen who wanted an Americansounding brand name.



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No fewer than four exceptional mechanisms enhance the precision of the RICHARD LANGE TOURBILLON "Pour le Mérite": the tiny fusée-and-chain transmission, the delicate tourbillon, the ultra-thin Lange balance spring, and – not least – the patented stop-seconds device for the tourbillon which makes it

possible to set the watch with one-second accuracy in the first place. Never before has an A. Lange & Söhne watch been endowed with so many complications that simultaneously enhance its rate accuracy, settability, and readability. And so, this remarkable timepiece truly deserves the honorary attribute "Pour le Mérite".

# ON WATCHTIME.COM

WatchTime's website is loaded with information about watches. For the stories shown here, go to watchtime.com/on-watchtime.

**MB&F DISCOVERS ROUND WATCHES** Max Büsser & Friends is launching a new line of watches called Legacy Machines. Büsser says they will be designed as if MB&F existed 100 years ago. Legacy Machine No. 1 combines classic elements like a round case and a finely finished movement with MB&F's trademark over-the-top horological unorthodoxy.





#### ZENITH ADOPTS OECHSLIN CALENDAR COMPLICATION

Zenith's new Captain Winsor Annual Calendar brings together two notable watchmaking achievements: the elegantly simple annual calendar complication designed by Ludwig Oechslin, curator of the Musée International d'Horlogerie (MIH), and Zenith's famous 36,000-vph in-house El Primero chronograph.



UNDER THE CUFF: CHRONOGRAPHS It's time once again to test your watchspotting skills. This quiz presents a dozen chronographs, each partially obscured by a shirt cuff. Can you identify these timepieces? Look closely to spot important clues.

#### **TECH CHECK**

How well do you know the world that lies beneath your dial? Are terms like "isochronism," "amplitude" and "remontoire" part of your lexicon? Test your knowledge of some basic watchmaking concepts.





#### **NOVAK DJOKOVIC SIGNS WITH** AUDEMARS PIGUET

In late August, as the U.S. Tennis Open got under way, Audemars Piquet announced that it had signed the world's number one player, Novak Djokovic, as a brand "ambassador." Djokovic enjoyed an exceptional 2011 season, winning 10 titles and three majors.



VISITING VACHERON Journey with us by helicopter to Vacheron Constantin's manufacturing facility in Le Sentier in the Vallée de Joux to see where

the brand's in-house movements begin their lives, and visit the headquarters where the timepieces come together. Our tours include 35 images and three original videos.



AL PACINO RECEIVES JAEGER-LECOULTRE FILM AWARD Al Pacino received the Jaeger-Le Coultre Glory to the Filmmaker Award at the 2011 Venice International Film Festival. The award recognizes artists who have left a mark on contemporary cinema. Prior winners include Takeshi Kitano (2007), Abbas Kiarostami (2008), Agnès Varda (2008), Sylvester Stallone (2009) and Mani Ratnam (2010).



#### **ULYSSE NARDIN'S NEW CAPTAIN**

One of the giants of the modern watch industry, Ulysse Nardin's Rolf Schnyder, died unexpectedly in April. Vice president Patrik Hoffmann was appointed CEO. We take a look at Schnyder's last days and at Hoffmann's rise to the CEO spot.



TIMELESS



GUCCI COUPÉ COLLECTION

## **The Richemont Group**

NOTE

Richemont's fiscal year ends March 31 €1 = \$1.38 (as of 10-14-11)

876

Number of boutiques owned by the Richemont Group (March 2011)

1,774,000,000

Sales in euros of Richemont's Specialist Watchmakers division in fiscal year 2011

7,215,911

Total compensation in euros for Bernard Fornas, CEO of Cartier, in fiscal 2011



3,937,374

Total compensation in euros for Richemont executive chairman and CEO Johann Rupert in fiscal 2011 A Jules Verneinspired watch from Van Cleef & Arpels

34.7

Percentage of interest Richemont holds in Rouages SA, Swiss producer of wheels and pinions for watches 7

Number of Richemont brands that are members of the Responsible Jewelry Council, which promotes ethical practices in the diamond and jewelry supply chains (Cartier, Van Cleef & Arpels, Piaget, Montblanc, Baume & Mercier, Jaeger-LeCoultre and Vacheron Constantin) 21,387

Number of people Richemont employs (March 2011)

Number of brands in Richemont's Specialist Watchmakers division

20

Percentage of interest Richemont holds in Swiss watchmaker Greubel Forsey SA

758,000,000

Total Richemont Group sales in euros in the United States in fiscal 2011

44,000,000

Losses in euros by Richemont's watch component manufacturers in fiscal year 2010

35,000,000

Losses in euros by Richemont's watch component manufacturers in fiscal year 2011



HIGH-TECH CERAMIC TIMEPIECE
DIAMOND SET DIAL
DIAMOND HEAD CERAMIC BRACELET
AUTOMATIC MOVEMENT
40-HOUR POWER RESERVE

## Our annual quiz on sports watches



What brand recently signed Novak Diokovic?

- 1. What athlete had an endorsement contract with TAG Heuer that expired this summer and was not renewed?
- A. Serena Williams
- B. Tiger Woods
- C. Roger Federer
- D. Alex Rodriguez
- 2. What brands market the Aquatimer, Aquanaut and Aquaracer, respectively? A. TAG Heuer, IWC, Patek Philippe

B. TAG Heuer, Omega, Patek Philippe C. IWC, Patek Philippe, TAG Heuer

- D. Rolex, IWC, TAG Heuer
- 3. How water-resistant are most current Blancpain Fifty Fathoms models?

- **A.** 53 fathoms
- **B.** 127 fathoms
- C. 164 fathoms
- D. 314 fathoms
- 4. The soccer team Manchester United is sponsored by:
- A. Hublot
- B. Panerai
- C. Frédérique Constant
- D. Vulcain
- 5. The Patek Philippe Nautilus and Audemars Piguet Royal Oak were designed by:
- A. Daniel Roth
- B. Gérald Genta
- C. Roger Dubuis
- D. Raymond Weil
- 6. What brand recently signed tennis player Novak Djokovic?
- A. Omega
- B. Rolex
- C. TAG Heuer
- D. Audemars Piguet
- 7. What brand sponsors golfer Darren Clarke?
- A. Omega
- B. Rolex
- C. TAG Heuer
- D. Audemars Piguet
- 8. What sports watch has "ears"?
- A. Patek Philippe Nautilus
- B. Omega Seamaster
- C. Rolex Submariner
- D. Audemars Piguet Royal Oak
- 9. What brand sponsors golfer Rory McIlroy?
- A. Omega
- B. Rolex
- C. TAG Heuer

- D. Audemars Piguet
- 10. This year Frédérique Constant was the official timekeeper of a car race for which TAG Heuer once named a watch.

#### What race was it?

- A. Monaco Grand Prix
- B. Mille Miglia
- C. La Carrera Panamericana
- D. Indianapolis 500
- 11. The 15 minute graduations in the first quadrant of a dive-watch bezel are intended for timing:
- A. Decompression stops
- **B.** The diver's ascent
- C. The diver's descent
- **D.** Time spent at the dive's deepest depth
- 12. Which golfer does Patek Philippe sponsor?
- A. Phil Mickelson
- **B.** Ernie Els
- C. Tom Watson
- **D.** None of the above
- 13. What brand introduced a watch commemorating New York Yankee Derek Jeter's 3,000th hit on July 9?
- A. Movado
- B. TAG Heuer
- C. Omega
- D. Hublot
- 14. Which of the following is true of the Rolex Deepsea?
- A. It is guaranteed water-resistant to 2,000 meters.
- **B.** It has a helium escape valve.
- C. It has a bidirectional turning bezel.
- **D.** It has a reinforced steel caseback.

84; 9D; 10C; 11A; 12D; 13A; 14B Answers: 1B; 2C; 3C; 4A; 5B; 6D; 7D;



# ZENITH

SWISS WATCH MANUFACTURE

SINCE 1865

EL PRIMERO by Zenith, inventor of the high-frequency self-winding chronograph





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MARTY BERNSTEIN

## BMW's Dynamic Duo

The new, fully loaded 650i rolls out as a convertible and a coupe.

ur lives are filled with multitudes of pairs: salt and pepper, gin and tonic, bacon and eggs. If you're fortunate you may get to experience BMW's newest pair, its luxurious 2012 650i convertible and coupe, a set of fraternal vehicular twins with V8 horsepower and torque power plants.

This is the sleekest, most sophisticated and technologically loaded duo sold today in the luxury price category, and fans of the Bavarian marque will find it hard to choose just one. I was only able to test drive the 650i convertible for this column, but BMW officials assure me the coupe is the mirror image in all respects except for the top. So whenever the word "convertible," "droptop," "ragtop" or "cabriolet" appears, you can also think "coupe" unless otherwise specified.

Bayerische Motoren Werke AG really knows its stuff when it comes to convertibles. Polk's list of the top 15 convertibles sold in the U.S. through June contains four BMW models whose aggregate market share is 14.7 percent, and it's easy to see why. The cabriolet I test-drove in

The 2012 BMW 650i convertible



Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, was the epitome of what a BMW convertible should be — stylish, sharp and speedy.

From the tip of its shark-like front, which morphs into a longish hood before seamlessly moving into the shimmering, sculpted sides to the rear end that (yes!) lacks the Bangle butt, this is the quintessential convertible. It's the new BMW convertible design statement, which to the brand's fervent fans moves its design statement forward yet retains distinguishing DNA. It's longer, lower and wider by mere inches, which may seem superficial, but this actually provides for greater interior space and legroom in both the front and rear seats.

Under the hood resides a V8 behemoth of twin-turbo power and pleasure. For gearheads, the 4.4-liter engine resonates with 440 horsepower and a scintillating 450 lb-ft of torque. For non-techtypes this translates into head-snapping, tire-smoking takeoffs of instantaneous, snarling speed. Remember, this is not a sportscar; it is a luxury convertible with a choice of a six-speed manual or a new, silky-smooth BMW eight-speed automatic. Both will do the 0-to-60 mph test in 4.9 seconds, but top speed is electronically limited to 155 mph. Repeat: this is not a sportscar. Sure.

The handling confirms and exceeds BMW's "The Ultimate Driving Machine" tagline. Words like "verve," "finesse," "agile," even "inspired" cannot adequately describe the pleasure one gets behind the wheel of this new ragtop. Electronic, computer-enhanced controls and tools deliver a unique combination of comfort, instant response and nimble handling that adjusts to road surfaces, body roll and those long sweeping curves and twisty roads. And this is a real con-

vertible, with a soft top that can be lowered in just 19 seconds or raised in 24 seconds at 25 mph.

Inside, the 650i is a true 2+2 vehicle. There are comfortable and electrically adjustable individual seats for the driver and front-seat passenger. Rear seats can actually hold normal-sized adults who don't have to use yoga to enter or exit. The interior design is best described as Teutonic minimalist, a cornucopia of harmonizing materials, surfaces and colors. It is luxurious without lavish excess.

This is a driver's car. Everything on the instrument panel and center console is slightly angled toward the person behind the tactile, responsive steering wheel. The cluster of round dials is an ophthalmologist's dream: no squinting necessary to read them during the day, even if you're wearing sunglasses, or at night, sans bifocals, thanks to BMW's distinctive orange coloring. There's a 10.2-inch flatscreen for infotainment and navigation information, and even the oftmaligned iDrive has matured and is now manageable even for novices.

In addition to the 650i convertible and coupe, BMW recently announced an equally luxurious 640i convertible and coupe, both with slightly less endowed V6 power plants. They are doppelgangers, except for what's under the hoods and their prices. All-wheel drive is now available on both duos.

For some, convertibles are an unfulfilled love until reaching that certain age, but with this plethora of features, prospective buyers may be less inclined to wait. Both vehicles are now at BMW dealers and, of course, at BMW prices: \$90,500 for the convertible and \$83,000 for the coupe (\$81,100 and \$73,600 for the corresponding 640i models).



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JAN DIVINCENZO

# The Paragon is Still the Paragon

The pillar of fine pens turned 80 this year and hasn't aged a bit.

n 1931, two companies, Wahl-Eversharp and an Italian upstart, OMAS, issued 12-faceted fountain pens within three months of each other. Both models took their design cues from a Doric column. Wahl's tribute to Attic antiquity was explicit in the name of its model, the Doric, whereas OMAS gave its model an upbeat, futuristic moniker, the Extra. Though the near simultaneous debut of these now classic pens was probably more than a mere coincidence, which company originated and which imitated the faceted design is still a matter of debate. Some call OMAS the copycat for having issued its Extra three months later than the Doric. Others, in defense of OMAS, claim that OMAS production facilities could not have responded to the Doric in such short order. Which leaves the possibility that before the pens went into production, the design leaked from one company to the other and both companies raced to get it to market.

Whichever company was first, we certainly know which one lasted. By 1957, the onetime colossus Wahl had bled out financially in its battles to dominate the ballpoint pen market and was acquired by Parker. The onetime cameo OMAS, however, concentrating and capitalizing on the success of the Extra, stuck to crafting the finest (as distinct from the trendiest) pens it could. In 1956 OMAS



launched the Extra 361B, known as the "million dollar pen" after a competitor offered that sum for its patent. In 1984 it introduced the Arte Italiana collection, the flagship of which, the Paragon, appeared the following year. The Paragon was almost identical to the Extra, except that, due to a celluloid shortage in the 1980s, it was made of precious resin. However, once celluloid was readily available again, OMAS released the "old-style" celluloid Paragon, which remained in production from 1991 to 2006.

The celluloid Paragon, like great Italian cuisine, respected its main ingredient: a stable, richly colored celluloid acetate, slowkilned according to OMAS founder Armando Simone's original recipe. Its metal accents were minimal: a cap band etched with the Greek key motif and an elegant roller clip affixed from within the cap, in 18k plated and rolled gold, respectively. What predominated, however, was its striking celluloid in seven handmixed patterns — saffron blue, royal blue, pearl gray, scarlet, and what the company calls saft green, bronze arco and green arco — of

The anniversary Paragon in royal blue

which even the section was carved. The pen had a piston filler that held 2.5 milliliters of ink, measured 142 millimeters in length and weighed a mere 20 grams — a featherweight compared to the 2005 Paragon, which weighed 48 grams.

The old-style celluloid Paragon has since been collected to extinction. This year, however, being the 80th anniversary of the Arte Italiana collection, presents a rare opportunity to acquire a celluloid Paragon. OMAS has issued a limited edition of 80 of these pens in each of three vintage colors (royal blue, saffron blue and pearl gray), with an imprint that reads "80th Arte Italiana Anniversary." Half of the 240 pens feature "high-tech" trim, which is rhodium-plated gold, and half 14k gold. There is an option to have, instead of a 14k-gold arrow nib, a specially produced "flessible" nib, which, available in fine and extra-fine, is a slice of old-time flexibility that only adds to the pen's sweetness and light. Priced at \$950, about what an old-style celluloid Paragon would cost, this pen is sure to hold its value.

As it stands, a mid-1930s gold-seal Wahl Doric in mint condition is a very collectible pen, fetching between \$500 and \$800 on the vintage market. A mint OMAS Extra Lucens of the same era, however, can command as much as \$2,500. OMAS increases the value of its newer models by endowing them with the excellent attributes of its older models, which, in turn, increases the value of the latter. This dynamic of the old driving the value of the new and vice versa is a kind of translation, or tradition, which in OMAS's case has resulted in perennial design, fine craftsmanship, solid functionality and intense collectibility.

## **ULTIMATE DISCRETION**



## PIAGET ALTIPLANO THE WORLD'S THINNEST AUTOMATIC WATCH

White gold case, 5.25 mm thick Calibre 1208P, 2.35 mm thick Piaget Manufacture movement





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RICHARD CARLETON HACKER

## High Holiday Spirits

## Rare and exclusive bottles for well-capitalized connoisseurs

f today's economy were a watch, it would be running slowly, or perhaps backwards. But thankfully, economic doldrums and the autumn chill are being warmed with a flurry of ultra-premium pours. Reasons for this lofty sipping range from a frustration with non-tangible investments to simply celebrating the holiday season in style.

Witness the Louis XIII Le Jeroboam, a three-liter Cristal de Sèvres decanter that now joins the 750-millimeter and magnum-Baccarat bottlings of this iconic cognac consisting of 1,200 different Grand Champagne eaux-de-vie ranging from 40 to 100 years old. Priced at \$22,800, each of the 100 individually numbered Jeroboams is encased in an oak chest with four exclusive crystal goblets, collectors' book, and signed certificate of authenticity by cellar master Pier-

At a black-tie launch in London, Royal Salute master blender Collin Scott (left) and the author examine a bottle of Tribute to Honour.



rette Trichet. Unfortunately, as I learned at the Le Jeroboam launch in Paris, threeliter spirit containers cannot be imported into America (a holdover from Prohibition). However, by special arrangement, on December 2, 2011 Le Jeroboam No. 13 will be auctioned in the U.S., with proceeds going to the Ruby Peck Foundation for Children's Education.

Not to be outdone, Highland Park premiered its oldest and most expensive Scotch whisky this year, its 50 Year Old, which carries a price tag of \$17,500. The whisky was distilled in 1960 and aged for half a century in Oloroso sherry casks. Evaporation left only enough to fill 275 bottles. Most were slated for allocation in the U.S., but the seven bottles reserved for 2011 immediately sold out, so the five bottles reserved for 2012 have already been released. Full of licorice, lemon, and nutmeg, with a whiff of smoke in the finish, you can be sure every dram will be poured judiciously.

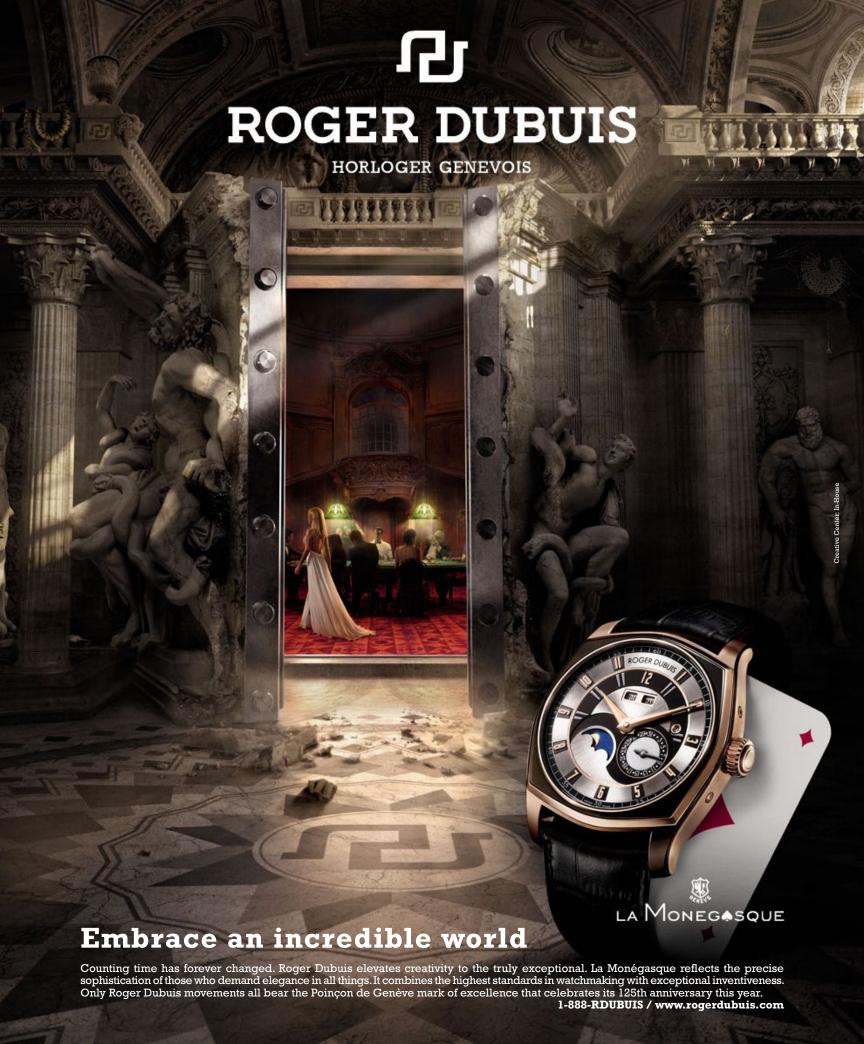
Dalmore cellars the oldest whiskies in the Scottish Highlands, with barrels dating to 1868. Consequently, master blender Richard Paterson vatted (combined) single malts from 1878, 1922, 1926, 1939, and 1951 to produce Candela (named after the international unit of light measurement), a 50-year-old single malt (only the youngest year can be referenced for age). Each of the 77 crystal decanters is priced at \$13,750.

By comparison, the 1,000 Baccarat decanters containing Glenmorangie's Pride 1981, at \$3,600 each, seem like bargains. But this extraordinary, non-chillfiltered whisky, bottled at 113.4 percent cask strength and full of creamy chocolate, toasted oak, and tingling spices, was even more labor-intensive to create. Bill Lumsden, Glenmorangie's master distiller and head of whisky creation, took some exceptional used bourbon barrels of 18year-old single malt and vatted 30 percent of them in casks formerly used for Chateau d'Yquem Sauternes. He then aged both whiskies for an additional 10 years. Finally reaching perfection at 28 years, this is Glenmorangie's oldest extramatured whisky to date.

But it's not just brown spirits that are garnering big bucks. HDW CLIX - an acronym for the initials of Buffalo Trace master distiller Harlen D. Wheatley combined with Roman numerals signifying 159 (the number of times this spirit was distilled) — is a super-premium vodka priced at \$299.99, a milestone that approaches the \$700 price for a bottle of Nolet's Reserve 104.6-proof gin.

In liqueurs, this year Grand Marnier has a onetime offering of Quintessence, the Marnier-Lapostolle family's secret "double parfum" maceration with bitter orange peels and old reserves of Grande Champagne cognacs aged up to 100 years in French oak vats. Only 2,000 bottles of this thick, citrusy velvet have been produced, each priced at \$700.

But the ultimate expression of this year's high spirits is Royal Salute's Tribute to Honour, an homage to the Honours of Scotland, the oldest crown jewels in the British Isles. A rare blend of single malts, each one aged no less than 45 years in used bourbon and sherry barrels, it is bottled in 21 individually numbered porcelain flagons encrusted with 413 black and white diamonds, and accented with gold and silver. At \$200,000 apiece, this is the world's most expensive blended scotch, and a further sign that spirits will indeed be high this holiday season.





MARK BERNARDO

## 40's Next Ch

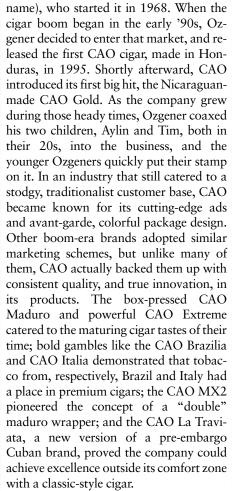
## Now part of the General Cigar family, the iconoclastic brand enters a new era and releases a new blend.

n the past, I have remarked in this space about parallels between the watch industry and cigar industry, and the one I've always found most fascinating is the similar corporate cultures. Both are dominated by large groups comprised of multiple well-known brands (Swatch and Richemont in the watch biz, General Cigar and Altadis in the cigar world); a handful of huge, established independents (Rolex and Patek Philippe, among others, in watches; Fuente, Davidoff, Padròn, etc., in cigars); and dozens of smaller independents, a few of which achieve enough success to catch the attention of one of the big groups. When one of the industry giants acquires one of the plucky independents, it is often cause for concern among the latter's fans; witness Richemont snapping up Roger Dubuis, LVMH grabbing Hublot, or General Cigar absorbing CAO International.

At first glance, cigar lovers could be forgiven for being worried. In its relatively

short existence, CAO has marched defiantly to its own drummer. Its main business was originally meerschaum pipes, a passion of founder, Cano A. Oz-

CAO OSA Sol Lot 50



gener (whose initials give the company its

In 2007, Denmark-based Scandinavian Tobacco Group acquired CAO, and in 2010, that firm merged with Sweden's Swedish Match AB, the colossus that owns General Cigar, forming one of the world's largest tobacco concerns. The result of the restructuring was that all premium cigar brands in the merged company, which also makes cigarettes, pipe tobacco and smoking accessories, would be consolidated under the General Cigar umbrella. Upstart CAO was now part of the stable with such classics as Macanudo, Partagas, and Punch. And when the company was obliged to move from its longtime headquarters in Nashville to General's offices in Richmond, Virginia, the Ozgeners opted to hand over the reins of the family business.

Fortunately for fans of the brand, I am happy to report that CAO appears to be in good hands with General's new management team, based on the first cigar launched under their auspices, the CAO OSA Sol. The cigar uses a specially selected wrapper leaf grown in Honduras's Olancho San Agustin Valley (hence the initials "OSA") and harvested in 2008, a crop year remarkable for ideal climatic conditions that produced rich essential oils in the leaves. The binder is Connecticut broadleaf and the filler Nicaraguan/Honduran blend. I tasted one from the Lot 50 size (a 5 x 50 robusto, one of three available sizes) and found it to be somewhat more medium-bodied than many other CAOs, but extraordinarily balanced and well constructed. The velvety, nearly vein-free wrapper felt great to the touch, and the cigar burned slowly and evenly, leaving a ridged, slate-gray ash. The overall character was creamy and toasty, with flavors of pepper, mesquite and mild spice on the palate and a heavy, floral aroma. The price is also right, starting at \$5.75 per cigar, and the packaging, as per CAO tradition, is striking as well. CAO wasn't broken, so General Cigar, wisely, chose not to fix it.

## 190 YEARS AGO

A MAN BET ON HORSES AND CHANGED WATCHMAKING FOREVER.







A visit with retrogradedisplay expert Jean-Marc Wiederrecht

BY IRIS WIMMER-OLBORT

like complications that really aren't so very complicated. I like to imagine and build things to be as simple as possible, and so I prefer complications with as few components as necessary." That's how Jean-Marc Wiederrecht, founder of the Swiss company Agenhor, which supplies movement modules to a bevy of well-known watch brands, sums up his working philosophy.

Wiederrecht's story begins in the small town of Vernier in the canton of Geneva, where Wiederrecht grew up and, after visiting a watchmaker's workshop at age 17, decided to pursue the profession of watchmaking. He had always preferred working with his hands and thinking about technical matters to academics. And so he abandoned his plan to study science and instead attended the Geneva Watchmaking School for four years, graduating in 1972 with top honors.

This was followed by a stint at Roger Châtelain SA in Geneva. Wiederrecht saw all types of watches there and was even involved in case manufacturing. He often worked on extremely thin movements and skeletonized watches. "I learned a great deal during this time," he says. After six years, in 1978, he was ready for a change and decided to establish his own workshop.

Wiederrecht set up his bench at home and began his new life as an independent watchmaker. Most of his work consisted of casing watches, but soon he began creating his own ultra-thin, skeletonized movements. Customers were impressed with Wiederrecht's work and Chopard placed an order for a simple moon-phase module intended for a thin watch movement. He designed the module at his kitchen table using a pencil and pa-

## "I LIKE TO IMAGINE AND BUILD THINGS TO BE AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE, AND SO I PREFER COMPLICA-TIONS WITH AS FEW COMPONENTS AS NECESSARY."

JEAN-MARC WIEDERRECHT



Horological Machine No.3 from MB&F: Time is shown on the sides of the two conical windows.



Agenhor headquarters in Meyrin

per. Other orders followed and Wiederrecht the watchmaker became Wiederrecht the watch designer, known for his imagination, technological prowess and originality.

He consistently broke new ground, creating completely new and innovative devices. He holds numerous patents, including for his first moon-phase module on an ultra-thin movement from 1982, a module for a bi-retrograde seconds display from 1987, and, from 1997, a large date module that is triple the size of conventional date displays.

HIS MOST IMPORTANT innovation, also patented, was a new type of gear that he presented in 2002. These gears have specially shaped, "split" teeth with asymmetric slits in their centers, which enable them to flex slightly. The teeth mesh cleanly with very little play, which makes for very steady motion of the display hands. This type of gearing, called engrenage de précision, or "play-free engagement gearing," is especially useful in the off-center retrograde and jumping-hour displays in which Wiederrecht specializes. It made possible watches such as the True North Perpetual Astronomical Compass for Arnold & Son,

in 2004, and the Horological Machine No. 2 for MB&F, in 2007. (Wiederrecht also helped develop MB&F's Horological Machine No. 3, designing its ceramic ball-bearing power transmission system.)

Wiederrecht's interest in retrograde displays goes back decades. In the late 1980s, he worked with Roger Dubuis (who had not yet founded his own watch brand) to develop for Harry Winston the world's first bi-retrograde perpetual calendar. That watch, the Harry Winston Double Retrograde Perpetual Calendar, came out in 1989.

His creations during the 1990s include a wide variety of complications: second time zones; single, double and triple retrograde seconds displays; equation-of-time displays and countdown displays.

In 1996, Wiederrecht and his wife Catherine founded the company Agenhor SA — an abbreviation for "Atelier Genevois d'Horlogerie." Catherine Wiederrecht handles the company's business and administration.

In 2009, Agenhor moved to a new, environmentally friendly headquarters in Meyrin, an industrial suburb of Geneva. "We are currently working on installing solar panels on the roof, and that will make us completely energy-independent," Wiederrecht says. Agenhor has no air conditioning or traditional heaters but nonetheless maintains a comfortable temperature thanks to an ingenious structure, natural ventilation, thick walls, solar ener-

## 0.0000000024 HP.



This is all the energy needed to power the completely newly developed Manufacture movement, CFB A1001, from Carl F. Bucherer. It features the first reliably functioning peripherally positioned rotor and associates perfect aesthetics and progressive technology. It was designed on the basis of the holistic "Evolution Technology" Manufacture Concept, by which Carl F. Bucherer goes its own way with the development of movements and mechanisms, challenging the existing and striving for more intelligent solutions. A mechanical microcosm which is housed in a perfect environment, thanks to the unmistakably distinctive design of the Patravi EvoTec DayDate.

www.carl-f-bucherer.com







For the Opus 9 by Harry Winston, Wiederrecht designed two parallel diamond belts that rotate to show the hours and minutes.

gy and geothermal heating. While planning the building, Wiederrecht became thoroughly engrossed in ecological building methods and energy conservation and pursued these subjects with as much interest as he does watchmaking.

Agenhor employs 27 people, about half of whom work as watchmakers and a quarter as technical designers. The remaining employees are responsible for the company's business and administration and report to Catherine Wiederrecht. She gets help from the couple's older son, Nico-

las, who has been working at Agenhor for five years, following the completion of a business degree. His younger brother, Laurent, an engineer and designer, joined Agenhor after finishing his engineering degree in Le Locle with a major in watchmaking.

THE COMPANY IS currently working for a number of watch companies, designing and creating complication modules or integrated complications to meet their specifications. Some brands, like Van Cleef & Arpels, Hermès and Harry Winston, openly discuss their connection to Wiederrecht, but other companies are more reticent. "Some of our customers demand discretion, so we're not permitted to say that we work for them," Wiederrecht says.

Customers supply their own base movements and Agenhor adds the complications, using components made by outside suppliers. Each design takes two to three years to realize, and Agenhor comes out with an average of two or three new mechanisms per year.

Wiederrecht does not spend much time at the bench anymore. "I'm just a thinker now," he says with a laugh.

His most recent designs include a watch for Hermès called Arceau le Temps Suspendu, ("arch of suspended time"), launched at Baselworld this year. As the name implies, this watch allows time to, essentially, stand still. Pressing a button causes the hands to jump to the 12 o'clock position, where they remain until the pusher is pressed again, which causes the hands to jump to the correct time. The additional module required for this action has two synchronized column wheels and a retrograde 360° function that make the jump possible.

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This year at the SIHH fair in Geneva, Van Cleef & Arpels unveiled another new watch incorporating a Wiederrecht mechanism. It's called Five Weeks in a Balloon, and was inspired by the Jules Verne novel of the same name. The watch has two retrograde hands, one representing a bird, the other an anchor, for the hours and minutes, respectively. It is one of what Van Cleef calls its "poetic complications" — watches whose displays carry a theme of fantasy or romance.

Wiederrecht has designed several complication mechanisms for Van Cleef: his connection with the famed French jewelry house is among the closest he has with any company. His retrograde displays were used for one women's watch called Lady Féerie ("fairy"), in which a fairy's wand and wing indicate the hours and minutes, respectively, and another called Pont des Amoureux ("lovers' bridge"). In this watch, the figures of a man and woman approach the center of a bridge and come together once every 12 hours. The man represents the minutes and the woman the hours (hence, the man reaches the center 11 times before finally encountering his amour on the 12th trip).

Wiederrecht has also designed for Van Cleef displays that use rotating disks. In 2006, the company introduced the first of its poetic complications, the Four Seasons, equipped with a disk that rotates once every 3651/4 days. The disk is decorated with pictures representing the seasons. As the disk rotates, the appropriate picture appears in a semicircular aperture on the dial. Midnight in Paris, a men's watch, features the same rotatingdisk system, but instead of the seasons it depicts the changing night sky over Paris during the course of a year.

Such watches may seem romantic, but they require a lot of prosaic head-scratching, usually in as secluded a setting as possible. Wiederrecht comes up with his best ideas on sleepless nights or on vacation. "In order to find a solution for a difficult technical problem, it needs to be quiet," he says.



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INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS™



Watch brands this year introduced a plethora of women's watches powered by automatic mechanical movements, from simple three-hands to chronographs to a minute repeater.

BY MARK BERNARDO



iamonds may still be a girl's best friend, but they are no longer the hottest girls' trend — at least in watches.

While dazzling stones and shiny gold on the outside are stil big draws for ladies' timepieces, both for the women who wear them and for the men who purchase them as gifts, more and more watch manufacturers are turning their attention to what's inside — that is to say, outfitting more models with Swiss-made mechanical movements, rather than the quartz movements that have become the go-to option for most ladies' watches.

The emergence of women's watches with mechanical movements has been happening slowly but inexorably over the past few years, due in part (as are most watch trends these days) to growing demand for such pieces in booming Asian markets. Recently, the pace has begun to quicken, as women and their watch-savvy significant others have begun to move away from the convenience of quartz toward the prestige, and horological cred, of mechanical.

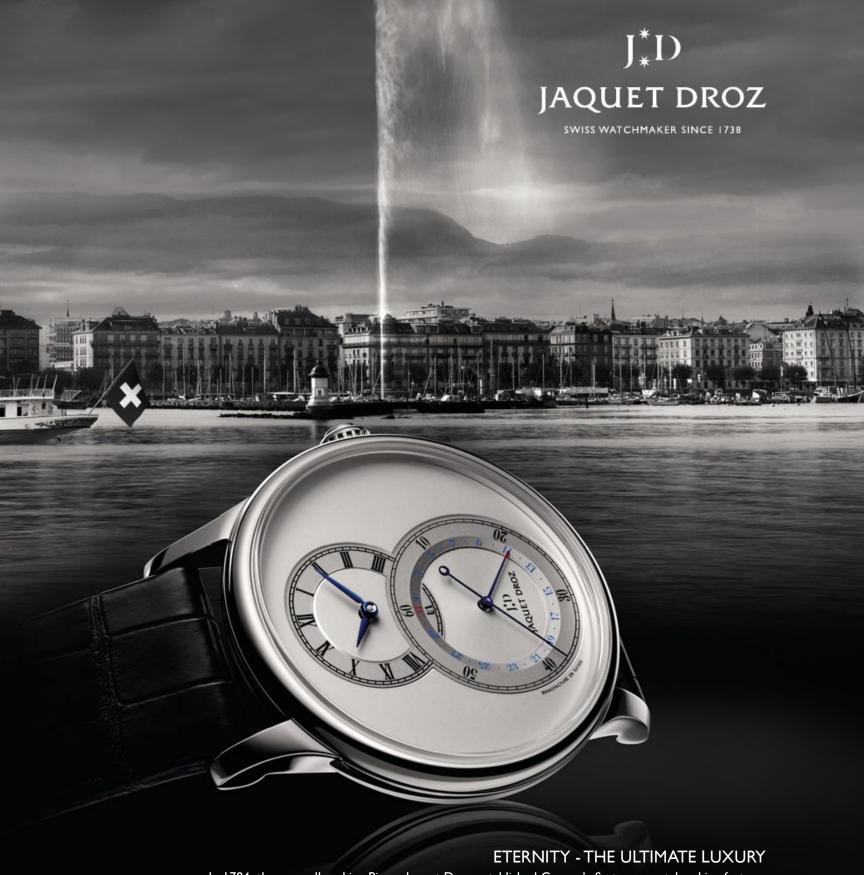
At this year's Baselworld and SIHH watch fairs, many purveyors of luxury-mechanical watches — including some that had mostly approached their ladies' lines as afterthoughts and saved their haute horlogerie expertise for new men's models unveiled new feminine watches that featured mechanical movements, even some rather complicated ones. (And yes, many or them still have plenty of diamonds. After all, it's never easy to leave behind one's best friend.)

The first sign that the ladies'-mechanical trend was no passing fancy was Patek Philippe's groundbreaking decision, in 2009, to introduce its long-awaited new manual-wind chronograph movement, Caliber CH 29-535 PS, not in a men's watch, as many expected, but in the decidedly feminine Ref. 7071R, nicknamed the Ladies First Chronograph. After all the buzz that launch generated, it should come as no surprise that the company was again at the forefront of the trend this year, when it introduced two new complicated ladies' timepieces. After a chronograph with a brand-new in-house movement, you may ask, what could the brand do for an encore? How about both a monopusher split-seconds chronograph and a minute repeater?



Patek Philippe Ladies First Split-Seconds Chronograph, Ref. 7059





In 1784, the groundbreaking Pierre Jaquet Droz established Geneva's first ever watchmaking factory. Which is why, along with La Chaux-de-Fonds and London, Geneva is part of the eternal legend that is Jaquet Droz.

Grande Seconde Quantième, réf. J007030242 - LEGEND : GENEVA Collection



DeWitt introduced a new ladies' line called Golden After **noon** (starting at SF56,000), which gets its name from a line in Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and is inspired, according to the company, by Pre-Raphaelite art of women and nature. The watches' cases feature a modified version of the DeWitt "Imperial Columns" motif on the flanks. The dials have mother-of-pearl flowers of different sizes and colors flowing from the center across a mother-of-pearl "sky" background, and the hour and minute hands are designed to resemble angel wings. The movement is an automatic ETA 2892.

Dior continued to chip away at its image as a fashion brand that makes almost exclusively quartz watches with the introduction of its Dior VIII collection. (The "VIII" signifies, among other things, founder Christian Dior's lucky number and the company's address in Paris, 8 Place Vendôme.) While the Dior VIII watches all have automatic movements, the most interesting of them are the Dior VIII Grand Bal models (\$22,000-\$36,000), which have an innovative horological twist as part of their design: the winding rotor is mounted on the dial and decorated with precious stones; the motion of the rotor brings to mind the elegant swaying of a ball gown.

Another fashion brand that has recently garnered watchmaking acclaim, Chanel, introduced its self-winding J12 Chromatic, which combines titanium and ceramic for a highly scratch-resistant sliver-gray case with a mirror-like diamondpolished finish. The 38-mm ladies' version (\$6,300) has 54 diamonds on the bezel and eight diamond indices.

Omega's biggest news at Baselworld was the launch of its Ladymatic collection, which contains Omega Caliber 8520/8521, an in-house movement made specifically for ladies' watches. Like other Omega movements, it boasts a co-axial escapement and a silicon balance spring. The watch has a motherof-pearl dial with, on the priciest models, single-cut diamond indices and a bezel pavé with 148 snow-set diamonds. There's also a sapphire caseback to view the movement. Prices range from \$6,400 (steel, no diamonds) to \$36,800 (gold, with diamonds).

Breguet, which claims a history of making complicated women's timekeepers that goes all the way back to Marie An-

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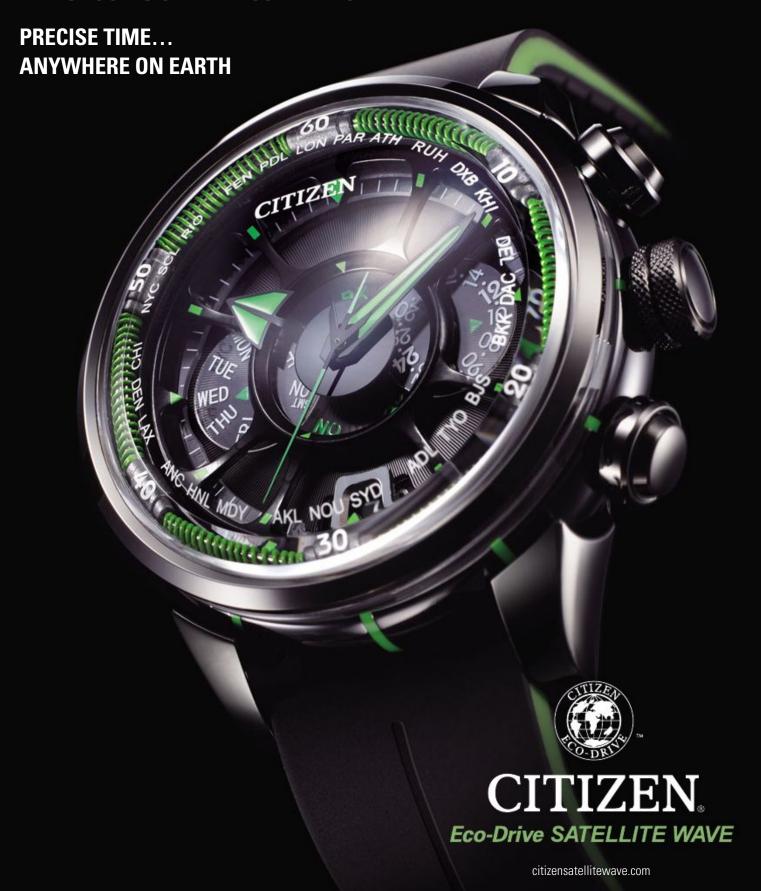




Afternoon



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 62

toinette, launched two new models this year: one sporty, the other dressy. The former is the Marine 8827 Ladies' Non Gem-Set Chronograph (\$33,500) which was previously available only in diamond versions. Inside the watch's 34.6-mm case (in rose or white gold) ticks Breguet Caliber 8827, which the brand calls the world's smallest self-winding chronograph movement. The watch has a natural mother-of-pearl dial with hand engraving done on a rose engine. Breguet's other offering is a new Reine de Naples 8918 model (\$33,400), in a rose-gold case with 117 fullcut diamonds on the bezel and flange. The watch has an ovoid case with the crown at 4 o'clock. It is named after a watch made for Caroline Murat, Queen of Naples, by Abraham-Louis Breguet in the 18th century. Its automatic movement, Breguet Caliber 537/1, is visible through a sapphire caseback. A pearshaped diamond sits at the 6 o'clock position on the silvered gold/mother-of-pearl dial.

Ulysse Nardin also offered up an "odd couple" of women's models this year. The sportier of these is the new Executive Lady (\$10,900-\$22,200), which, like its men's counterpart, the Executive Dual Time, includes Ulysse Nardin's patented quick-set second-time-zone display and big date. Powered by automatic caliber UN-24, the watch has a diamond-set bezel and mother-of-pearl dial; its 40-mm case is in stainless steel or gold. More lighthearted in its design is the Caprice Queen of Hearts (\$22,400-\$59,500), on which six hearts, alternating with small diamonds, serve as indices on the mother-of-pearl dial. The cushion-shaped, rose-gold case is also diamond-bedecked and has an exhibition caseback through which the owner can view automatic UN-13 and its gold, diamond-set rotor.

Hearts are also the theme of Frédérique Constant's Amour Heart Beat by ShuQi. On this watch's dial, the "O" in the word "Amour" is heart-shaped and serves as the aperture in which the watch's "heart beat" — that is, the pulsating balance of automatic Caliber FC-310 — is on display. There are three models, each limited to 888 pieces, in steel with diamonds, gold-plated with diamonds, and a gold-plated version without diamonds and with a "gourmet chocolate" dial. Prices range from \$3,995 to \$4,250.

Finally, if Frédérique Constant's heart beat aperture isn't enough to flaunt your lady's horological taste, there's Piaget's **Altiplano Skeleton 34 mm** (\$75,000), with its hand-wound, diamond-set, skeletonized movement (Caliber 838D, based on Piaget's famous, ultra-thin *manufacture* Calibre 9P). The 34-mm rose-gold case is set with 357 diamonds and has a white alligator strap.





# BY ALEXANDER LINZ PHOTOS BY OK-PHOTOGRAPHY

Longines's
Column Wheel
Chronograph
contains a movement made
especially for the
brand by ETA, its
sister company in
the Swatch Group.

## Pros

- + State-of-the-art chronograph caliber
- + Near-perfect rate results
- + Attractive price

## Cons

- Loose chronograph pushers
- Sharp lug edges
- Corrector button for setting the date is too small



TA is well known for its expertise in creating reliable chronograph movements. Its caliber A08.231, developed especially for the Longines watch brand (both ETA and Longines are owned by the Swatch Group) is a column-wheel chronograph movement. It was unveiled in 2009 and later incorporated into several Longines models, including reference L2.2.733.4.72.2, which was launched last year and is the subject of this test. In designing the caliber, which is used exclusively by Longines (the movement is also known by its Longines designation, L688.2), ETA engineers combined several features from other ETA movements: a reliable unidirectional winding mechanism, a Nivarox escapement with a balance that vibrates at 28,800 vph, a quick date adjustment with pusher at 10 o'clock, and an oscillating pinion — a mobile shaft with two pinions at the ends that connects the gear train and the chronograph mechanism. The dialside end of the oscillating pinion meshes permanently with the fourth wheel of the movement; only after the start pusher is pushed will the clutch lever cause the lower pinion to mesh with the teeth of the chrono-runner.

The L688.2 incorporates features that make it more efficient and easier to service than some existing ETA chronograph movements. In contrast to them, the L688.2 has pushers that act directly on the corresponding start, stop and reset mechanisms. And the two-arm reset hammer (pivoting on the reset lever) for the chronograph hand and minute counter is now selfadjusting.

**STARTING THE** chronograph begins by pressing the pusher at the 2 o'clock position to activate the shortened operating lever. (Earlier versions had a relatively long lever.) After the rotation to the right is complete, the column-wheel jumper holds the column wheel in this position. At the same time, the tip of the clutch lever pointed towards the wheel falls between two columns and the entire lever moves slightly to the right. A pin on

OUR TEST WATCH OPERATED VERY SMOOTHLY, BUT THERE WAS EXCESSIVE PLAY IN BOTH CHRONO PUSHERS.

## **SPECS**

#### LONGINES COLUMN WHEEL CHRONOGRAPH

Manufacturer: Compagnie des Montres Longines, Francillon SA, CH-2610 Saint-Imier, Switzerland

Reference Number: L2.733.4.72.2

Functions: Hours, minutes, small seconds. date, chronograph with 12-hour and 30minute counters, hack mechanism

Movement: Longines L688.2 (ETA A08.231), automatic; diameter = 30 mm; height = 7.9 mm; 27 jewels; Swiss pallet escapement; Glucydur balance; selfcompensating Nivarox 1 flat hairspring; 28,800 vph (4 Hz); Incabloc shock absorber; lift angle = 53°; unidirectional rotor with heavy metal segment; single barrel; 54-hour power reserve

Case: Tripartite, stainless-steel case with snap-on sapphire caseback and standard crown and pushers; sapphire crystal with nonreflective coating on one surface; water-resistant to 300 meters

Strap and clasp: Crocodile strap with stainless-steel buckle

Rate results (Deviation in seconds per 24 hours, without/with chronograph switched on):

Dial up	0	-0.5
Dial down	+3	+3
Crown up	+1	+2
Crown down	+1	0
Crown left	+2	+2
Crown right	+1	0
Greatest deviation:	3	3.5
Average deviation:	+1	+1
Average amplitude:		
Flat positions	311°	297°
Hanging positions	285°	268°

Dimensions: Diameter = 39 mm, height = 13 mm, weight = 102 g

Price: \$2.850



Oris Big Crown X1 Calculator
Automatic mechanical movement
Chronograph
Slide rule function
Gun-metal PVD coating
See our story at www.oris.ch/journey-intime



the other end controls the clutch lever, moving it in a clockwise direction, while the end of the clutch lever moves counterclockwise. This is where we find the bearing of the oscillating pinion. It moves slightly to the right and allows the oscillating pinion (driven by the fourth wheel) to mesh with the chrono-runner. As it does, the mechanism releases the lock for the hour counter and the chrono-runner, and the chrono-runner with the wheel for the minute counter at 3 o'clock, which also begins to move. The lifting of the lock also allows the hand of the hour counter at 6 o'clock, which is traditionally driven directly by the barrel, to gradually move. Pressing the pusher at 2 o'clock again causes the column wheel to turn back to the right. The next column

lifts the tip of the clutch lever again, which causes the clutch lever to move slightly counterclockwise and then allows it to move clockwise again. The oscillating pinion lifts away from the chrono-runner. Simultaneously, the two locks come in contact with the hour counter and the chrono-runner. This stops the chronograph mechanism and the elapsed time can be read from the watch dial. Pressing the pusher at 2 o'clock again will restart the process and make it possible to add an additional time interval to the first.

The watch has no flyback function; you can reset the chronograph only by pushing the start-stop button at 2 o'clock and then pushing the return-to-zero button at 4 o'clock. Doing so starts the following sequence: three reset cams, mounted on





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**LONGINES COLUMN** WHEEL CHRONOGRAPH

#### Strap and clasp (max. 10 points):

The crocodile strap and the buckle, with its Longines logo, are nicely finished.

Operation (5): A fluted crown makes it easy to set the time. Smoothly operating chrono pushers. Date adjustment via push-button, which is too small and requires use of special tool (included). 4

Case (10): The looseness of the start-stop pushers and the sharp lower edges on the lugs detract from the otherwise nicely finished case.

Design (15): The classic-looking dial has no striking features.

Legibility (5): Good under normal lighting conditions but less legible under bright and low light. Limited luminous material.

Wearing comfort (10): Its diameter (39 mm), thinness and light weight make this chronograph comfortable to wear. 9

Movement (20): ETA developed this state-of-the-art chronograph movement exclusively for Longines. For its price class, it is nicely decorated and finished.

Rate results (10): Near-perfect rate results and exceptional amplitudes in every position, even when the chronograph is running. During the wearing test, the watch showed results that rival those of a radio-controlled watch.

Overall value (15): Once the minor weaknesses of its case have been corrected we will be able to call it "a lot of watch at an attractively low price." 13

**80 POINTS** TOTAL:

The dial has a refined, classic look, but little contrast between the hands and dial colors.

the pinions of the chronograph hand and minute and hour counters, form the basis of the reset mechanism. During the reset process, hammers press on the cams. The hammers' surfaces turn the cams so that at the end of the reset process the flat edges lie along the flat, top side of the cams. Two operating levers activate the hammers. One of these moves the long reset lever for the chronograph hand and the minute counter. A new innovation is the self-adjusting, two-armed reset hammer attached to the end for the chronograph hand and minute counter. On the end near the column wheel there is also a safety interlock which, when the reset pusher is pressed, should fall in the gap between two columns. If, however, a column is at this position, the reset mechanism will be blocked in order to prevent an unintentional operating error by the watch's wearer. The second operating lever presses directly on the shorter, one-piece reset hammer for the hour counter, but only when the reset mechanism has been released by the column wheel as described above. During the reset process the two locks are lifted. Only after the reset pusher is released, and the chronograph hand returns to its starting position, will the reset hammers return to their initial position and the locks be reactivated.

Longines's decision to use a column wheel rather than a traditional cam system to control the chronograph functions has both visual and technical advantages. The column wheel is created in a complicated milling process that ensures less wear than a cam system, since the load exerted by the clutch process is distributed over six rotating columns as opposed to only two points. There's another advantage: the lack of a shearing force caused by the rocking action of the cam system gives the process a smoother and more comfortable feel when you press the startstop and reset pushers.

WE COULD CERTAINLY appreciate the smooth operation of our test watch. The pressure point — which you feel when you push the chronograph buttons — is exactly what one would expect from a high-quality chronograph. Less satisfying was the





The inset corrector button in the case can only be operated easily with a special tool, which may not be on hand.

excessive play exhibited by both pushers. Their looseness does not match the quality of this fine movement. The problem is evident from the crooked position of the pushers in their case openings. The overall feel of the case should also be mentioned, as the lower edges of the lugs are much too sharp. Both features — the pushers and the lugs — negatively affected our otherwise positive impression of the test watch. In particular, its perfect rate results caught our attention: they showed only marginal deviations from zero, as measured by an electronic timing machine, regardless of whether or not the chronograph was running. The amplitudes in every position were just as impressive. The wrist test showed rate results that rivaled those of a radiocontrolled watch, a true mark of the quality of the Longines caliber. The visual refinements of the bridges and plates, typical in this price category, along with the blued column wheel, added to our overall positive impression of the movement. However, we found the quick date adjustment, which uses an integrated case button, to be something of a drawback. The corrector button was so small that even the tip of a conventional ballpoint pen was too large to change the date. And how often will the setting tool (included with the watch) be on hand when it's needed?





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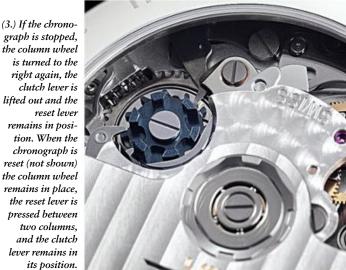
#### Longines Column Wheel Chronograph



(1.) The initial position before starting the chronograph: The reset lever is visible at the top and the clutch lever below.



(2.) The starting process: The column wheel is moved to the right, the clutch lever falls between two columns and the reset lever is lifted.



graph is stopped, the column wheel lifted out and the reset (not shown) the column wheel remains in place,



The excessive play in the chronograph pushers leaves them loose and crooked (as shown above), and does not match the high quality of the movement.

The light-colored dial and rhodium-plated hands make reading the time and elapsed time quite easy under normal lighting conditions, but legibility declines considerably in very bright or darker conditions due to reflections and insufficient contrast between hands and dial. In the dark, the rather spartan use of Super-LumiNova on the dial and hour and minute hands is sufficient for only a brief time; it quickly becomes difficult to read the time in the dark. Furthermore, a thorough examination of the dial gave us reason to criticize the length of the hands. Both the minute hand and the central chronograph hand are about a millimeter too short and do not extend to the minute track. This is certainly a minor flaw but one that many watch purists, especially those with a particular interest in chronographs, might find important. Another aspect deserves note: the lack of additional index markings between the seconds markers gives the chronograph a classic, refined appearance; other Longines models with the new L.688.2 caliber include the additional markings and thus have a sportier look.

At the end of the day it is clear that Longines has achieved a worthy goal with its column-wheel chronograph, which sells for \$2,850. No other manufacturer offers such a solid mechanism at such a reasonable price.





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SPORTS
WATCHES
2011

OUR ANNUAL FOCUS on sports watches includes more than 50 watches from Swiss, German, Italian, Japanese and American brands, at prices starting at \$200. The section contains two tests. One is of the new giant (it has a 47-mm diameter) Breitling Chronomat GMT, the cover story of this issue. The other is of Jaeger-LeCoultre's Master Compressor Diving Navy SEALs, a watch developed in conjunction with the famous U.S. military team trained for combat at sea, in the air, or on land (hence SEALs). There's also a review of divers' watches from Omega, Buran and Porsche Design, conducted by a professional diver who gave them a wrist test in a diving tower. We examine some watches for guys who like the great outdoors, and spotlight Nicolaus Spinner, the man behind Germany's UTS brand.

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# Audemars Piguet

A sports watch with a tourbillon is rare, and a sports watch with a tourbillon, a chronograph, and automatic winding is rarer still. But that's exactly what you get with Audemars Piguet's Royal Oak Offshore Selfwinding Tourbillon Chronograph. The mechanism that makes it possible is Calibre 2987, developed and produced in-house by the company at its manufacture in Le Brassus, Switzerland. Composed of 335 parts, Calibre 2987 includes a column-wheel chronograph with a clever couplingyoke mechanism that prevents the chronograph hand from jerking upon activation and enhances shock-resistance; a oneminute tourbillon on a lightweight, blackened titanium bridge; and a peripheral rotor in 950 platinum mounted on ball bearings. It's also meticulously decorated, with several mirror-polished surfaces and rhodium-coated, bead-blasted mainplate and bridges with circular graining, hand-drawn file strokes and beveled edges. The 44-mm octagonal case is made of forged carbon, with bezel, crown and push-pieces in black ceramic and push-piece guards in titanium. The black dial features the familiar Royal Oak "Mega Tapisserie" pattern. Both the applied hour markers and the hour and minute hands are in faceted white gold with luminescent coating. The chronograph has a central sweep seconds hand and a 30-minute counter at 3 o'clock; small seconds are at 9 o'clock. The tourbillon is visible in an aperture at 6 o'clock. A tachymeter scale surrounds the dial on its flange. The movement, which has a power reserve of 65 hours, can be viewed through a sapphire caseback. The watch has a grooved black rubber strap. Not for the faint of heart or light of wallet, its price is \$285,600.

#### Bell & Ross

The watch world has entered a Picasso-esque "blue period": blue dials, cases, and other elements began appearing on several models this year. One of the most striking of these is Bell & Ross's BR 03 Blue Ceramic,

which offers an azure alternative to the brand's predominantly black instrument-panel-style pilots' watches. The 42-mm square case is made of matte blue ceramic and is attached to a wide, blue-tinted rubber strap. The light-blue hands, numerals and indices on the black dial are treated with a photoluminescent coating and the nonreflective sapphire crystal is lined with a tinted mineral glass. The movement is an automatic. Price: \$4,500.



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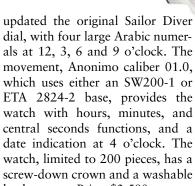
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#### **I** Anonimo

The Carbon Diver is Anonimo's newest version of its entry-level Sailor Diver model. The dial and bezel are made of carbon fiber, a material commonly used in ship and boat building because of its strength and lightness. The carbon fiber elements help make the watch light on the wrist and thus suitable for recreational diving and sailing, despite its sandblasted, 42-mm stainless-steel case and extra-thick sapphire crystal. Anonimo has also leather strap. Price: \$2,580.





The Storm Chaser DLC, part of the Fireman collection, is a Swiss-made chronograph with an ETA 7750 movement. It gets its nickname from its tachymeter and telemeter scales. The former allows the wearer to measure speeds over a given distance and the latter to calculate the wearer's distance from an event with both visual and audible components, like the

thunder and lightning of an approaching storm. The watch's 43-mm stainlesssteel case has a black DLC coating and the dial boasts 18 tiny, multi-colored gas tubes for long-lasting illumination in darkness. The hour indices glow blue, except for the 12 o'clock marker, which glows orange; the chronograph hands are in green and the hour, minute and seconds hands are yellow. The watch, which is limited to 1,000 pieces, is water-resistant to 100 meters and has a black rubber strap. It sells for \$3,599.

### **I**Sector



Founded almost 40 years ago and based in Milan, Sector produces sporty, design-oriented watches, in a variety of materials, which use both quartz and automatic movements. The Shark Master 1000 is, as the name implies, a dive watch with 1.000-meter water-resistance. The substantial stainless-steel case measures 46 mm in diameter and offers screw-down crowns, a helium release valve, and an adjustable inner bezel to time dives. The outer bezel is fixed. The hour and minute hands are different colors to help prevent confusion, and the seconds hand is red for enhanced visibility. All three hands are treated with luminous material. The dial features a raised wave motif that brings Ulysse Nardin's Blue Surf to mind. A 22-mm rubber strap secures the watch to your wrist. Special packaging includes a waterproof lamp. Priced at \$1,995.





www.corum.ch

#### Showcase 2011



# **l** Bulgari

Both Bulgari and the New Zealand All Blacks, one of the world's most renowned rugby teams, trace their origins to 1884. This year, the two have partnered on a special-edition sport watch, the Endurer Chronosprint All Blacks, part of Bulgari's Daniel Roth Collection. Powered by Caliber DR1306, made in-house at Bulgari's manufacture in Switzerland's Vallée de Joux, the watch features a chronograph with two different-length hands mounted on a single axis. The hands circle a railroad-track scale with 12hour and 60-minute gradations, enabling the measurement of long intervals of time. To begin a new measurement, simply press the ridged pushbutton at 7:30, which returns both hands to zero and instantly restarts the chronograph. The decorative motif on the dial represents a Koru tattoo, worn by New Zealand's native Maori people to symbolize virility, rebirth and life. The case is made of a special corrosion-resistant steel and coated with black DLC and has a semi-transparent sapphire caseback bearing the All Blacks team logo. The movement's decorations include circular graining and Côtes de Genève. The price for the watch is \$16,300.

#### **I** Casio



Casio's perpetually popular and eminently affordable G-Shock series expands again with the Matte Black and Gold series, which includes this new model in the G-Shock Master of G collection, dubbed G9300GB. The watch contains Casio's "Self-Charging Tough Solar" system, which uses a large-capacity solarpowered battery to power its numerous functions. Those functions include a twin-sensor compass and thermometer, moonphase data, a 1/100-second chronograph, an automatic electro-luminescent backlight, four daily alarms plus snooze and mute functions, and world-time indication for 48 cities. Nicknamed "Mudman," this model has a case that is extra mud-resistant. The price is \$200.



#### Corum

Slightly smaller than its predecessor — 2010's Seafender Deep Hull 48, the first of a new line of divers' watches in Corum's Admiral's Cup collection — the Admiral's Cup Seafender Chrono 46 is the first in that line to include a chronograph function. Its 12-sided case is 46 mm in diameter, made of grade 5 titanium, and has a unidirectional rotating bezel that clicks into 120 positions. The watch is water-resistant to 300 meters and has a screw-down caseback and screw-locked pushers to start, stop and reset the chronograph. The dial, protected by a curved, nonreflective sapphire crystal, features the trademark Admiral's Cup nautical-pennant indices along the flange; the chronograph minutes and hours are on subdials at 3 o'clock and 6 o'clock, respectively, and small seconds are at 9 o'clock. The date is in a window at 6 o'clock. The movement, Corum Caliber CO753, is certified by COSC. The watch has a 48-hour power reserve and is attached to a vulcanized, black rubber strap with titanium buckle. Price: \$9,650.





#### Graham

Graham's Chronofighter Fortress pays homage to the historic timepieces worn by British Royal Air Force pilots in World War II bombers (nicknamed Flying Fortresses). The 43-mm steel case has alternating brushed and polished surfaces and an exhibition caseback allowing a view of automatic Caliber G1742, with column-wheel chronograph and a 48-hour power reserve. The indices, numerals and hands are treated with a beige Super-LumiNova meant to resemble the color of the aging tritium found on historic military watches; the red chronograph seconds and minutes hands contrast with the black dial. The brown leather strap



evokes the color and texture of pilots' bomber jackets. Like all Graham's Chronofighter models, this one features a big lever on the side of the case that allows the wearer to operate the chronograph pushers while wearing thick gloves, another nod to 1940s bomber pilots. The price is \$9,265.

# Eberhard & Co.

For the 10th anniversary of its groundbreaking Chrono 4 model, the first wristwatch with four aligned subdials, Eberhard & Co. has released the limited-edition Chrono 4 Grand Taille, which features a bright red "X" (Roman numeral 10) at the 10 o'clock position, and an anniversary engraving on the caseback. The watch has a 46-mm stainless-steel case with a screw-down crown and rubber-topped push-buttons. Its movement, based on an ETA 2894, powers a chronograph and a date indication in a window at 12 o'clock. The four linearly placed subdials indicate the chronograph minutes, chronograph hours, 24-hour scale and small seconds. The polished bezel surrounds a tachymeter scale. The subdial hands and central seconds hand, like the anniversary "X," are red. The watch is available on a rubber or crocodile strap or a steel bracelet. Eberhard will make 500 pieces, priced from \$9,020 to \$9,480.

### I Mühle Glashütte

Previously, this German brand's Terranaut watches have been pilots' models, but the Terranaut III Trail is designed with hikers and mountaineers in mind. It has a brushed stainless-steel case, with or without black PVD coating, and a scratch-resistant sapphire crystal with nonreflective treatment. The movement, automatic SW 200-1, is visible through the clear caseback and includes Mühle's own "Spechthals" regulation, which the company says renders the movement unaffected by impacts and unevenness in terrain. The watch has a power reserve of 38 hours. The sand-colored hands, numerals and indices (all of which are also coated with Super-LumiNova) fit the "trail" motif and stand out against the black dial. The date is in a window at 6 o'clock. The watch comes on a black leather strap and costs \$1,499 (non-PVD) to \$1,599 (PVD).



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#### **I** Hublot

"Race to the bottom" is usually a negative phrase applied to extremes in pop culture and politics. In the world of watches, however, it could describe manufacturers' ongoing competition to set new records in water-resistance for their divers' models. Hublot entered the race this year with the introduction of the King Power 48 MM Oceanographic 4000, a massive, robust timepiece that, as its name implies, can descend to at least 4,000 meters underwater. Produced with the input of the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, the watch has a 48-mm titanium case with a microblasted satin finish (there is also a carbon-fiber version), which makes it light on the wrist despite its enormous size. The dial, flange and hands have large surface areas treated with Super-LumiNova for maximum luminosity at great depths. The unidirectional, internal rotating flange, operated by a crown at 2 o'clock, is used to set dive times. The other crown at 4 o'clock sets the time and date. Both crowns are screwed down and protected by oversized crown guards. There is a helium valve at 10 o'clock. The movement, Hublot's selfwinding HUB1401, has satin-finished, beveled and polished bridges and a power reserve of 42 hours. The watch is available with two straps, black rubber and a rubber-nylon blend. The titanium version, limited to 1,000 pieces, costs \$17,900; the "All Black" carbon fiber model, limited to 500 pieces, is \$23,900.



#### **I**Reactor



Fishermen will appreciate Reactor's Graviton 2 tide watch, which comes with 275 of the top North and Central American fishing and boating spots pre-programmed into its memory. The quartz-driven model's LCD dial can also can display tide charts, actual tide heights, sunrise and sunset times and moon-phase information for all of the pre-programmed locations, and even lets the user add locations to cover virtually the entire North and Central American coasts plus the Caribbean. The watch has a big, 45-mm stainless-steel case; Super-LumiNova hands and dial markers; and a triple-o-ring, screw-down crown system. It is water-resistant to 200 meters and comes on a brushed stainless-steel or blacknitride-plated bracelet or a rubber strap. Prices range from \$500 to \$575.

#### **I** Panerai

Left-handed Paneristi have another watch made especially for them. Its moniker is a mouthful — Luminor 1950 Chrono Monopulsante Left-Handed 8 Days Titanio — which is why most will refer to it as, as they do to other Panerais, by its reference number, PAM 00345. Based on rare, historic models produced for southpaws in the Italian Navy, the watch is a monopusher chronograph with two counters, powered by Panerai's in-house Caliber P.2004/9. Made at Panerai's manufacture in Neuchatel, the hand-wound movement has a

column wheel and vertical clutch for the stopwatch functions, and three spring barrels that hold eight days of power reserve.

> The power-reserve indicator is on the bridge of the movement, which is visible through a sapphire caseback. The case is brushed titanium, with a polished titanium bezel and the crown (with crown protector) on the left side, ideal for use by left-handed wearers. The brown dial is in Panerai's famous "sandwich" style and has luminous numerals and hour markers. The watch is water-resistant to 100 meters and comes on a brown, antiqued leather strap. Only 150 pieces will be made, priced at \$23,400 each.





#### **I** Seiko

The new Sportura FC Barcelona Chronograph is the fruit of Seiko's partnership with European soccer club FC Barcelona, current champions of the Spanish league and UEFA Champions League. The watch has a 60-minute chronograph, powered by a quartz movement, which has a split-time function and can measure times in 1/5-second increments. It also includes an alarm function and date indicator. The bezel is marked with a tachymeter scale and the dial features the FCB crest in the team's colors. The case is stainless steel, 42 mm in diameter, and includes a screw-down crown and two cone-shaped chrono pushers. The watch comes on a perforated leather strap with a steel buckle, and is delivered in a special presentation box. Price: \$495.





# **I** Blancpain

Following up on last year's limitededition Tribute to Fifty Fathoms, Blancpain this year offers the Fifty Fathoms Tribute to Fifty Fathoms Agua Lung, based on a model of the brand's famous divers' watch from the 1950s. The watch has a satin-brushed steel case measuring 45 mm in diameter and water-resistant to 300 meters. It has a unidirectional turning bezel and a black dial with a date window at 4:30. It's powered by Blancpain's Caliber 1315, visible through a sapphire caseback, an automatic with an impressive 120-hour power reserve. Limited to 500 pieces, the watch comes on a perforated strap made of sail canvas and sells for \$15,800.

# Richard Mille



This divers' watch from Richard Mille, the Automatic Chronograph RM 032, is packed with features and complications: a 12-hour flyback chronograph with 60-minute countdown function, an annual calendar with oversize date and month indicator and a 50-hour power reserve, in addition to numerous useful divers' functions. The huge, 50-mm case is water-resistant to 300 meters; it has a unidirectional rotating bezel with markers for the first 15 minutes highlighted in red. The grooved ring around the crown can be turned to lock the crown and chronograph pushers for protection against water pressure; the arrow on the ring is green when unlocked, red when locked. Another unusual security feature on the watch is its so-called running indicator, located at 3 o'clock on the dial, a moving disk with alternating black and Super-LumiNova sectors that make it easy to tell at a glance if the watch is functioning. The skeletonized, highly decorated movement, automatic caliber RM 032, has a variable rotor system that can be adjusted to the wearer's level of activity, either speeding up or slowing down the winding process. The lugs of the tripartite case, which is available in titanium (\$135,000) or rose gold (\$175,000), are affixed to the rubber strap with screws.



#### Airman Base 22

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# **I** Glycine

The Lagunare Automatic L1000 is a divers' watch water-resistant to 300 meters and featuring a rotating bezel that is held in place by means of a blocking crown at 4 o'clock. The case is made of steel and is 44 mm in diameter. It has both satin and polished finishes. The crown screws into the case. The watch contains the ETA 2824-2 automatic caliber, which has a 38-hour power reserve. In addition to the model shown here (\$2,325), the watch is also available with a rubber strap (\$1,900) and with a white or blue dial.



#### I Vulcain

Fifty years ago Vulcain introduced a watch called the Nautical that showed a diver how long he would have to spend at the various decompression stops following his dive. The watch had another diverfriendly feature: an alarm that was audible underwater. Now the brand has updated that watch and issued it in a limited edition (1,961 pieces, for the year the original was launched) model called the Nautical Heritage Limited Edition. The dial has a rectangular aperture that shows the decompression times required for the length and depth of a particular dive: the wearer uses the crown at 4 o'clock to turn a rotating upper dial and thus display the correct values. The movement, the Vulcain Cricket Caliber V-10, is manually wound and has a frequency of 18,000 vph. It has two barrels, one for the time and the other for the alarm. The case, which is 42 mm in diameter, has a triple back that serves both to increase the watch's water-resistance (300 meters) and to amplify the alarm sound. The crystal is made of Plexiglas, the strap of water-resistant calfskin. Price: \$6,475.





# l Gergé

The "M" in Gergé's M series of watches stands for Metropolis, Fritz Lang's futuristic, art deco-infused masterpiece from 1927. All the watches in the series have an art deco look, thanks to the vertical Geneva stripes on their dials and their squared-off lugs. This M-series model, the Type-M3, shown here with a titanium case, is a COSC-certified, monopusher, automatic chronograph. The case is 45 mm wide and water-resistant to 100 meters. The watch (\$7,500) is a limited edition of 88 pieces. It is also available with a titanium case/rose-gold bezel, with or without diamonds, and with a black dial.





#### **I**Tutima

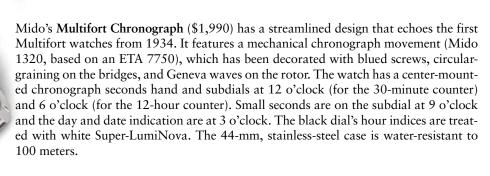
The new Pacific watch from Tutima contains an automatic movement, ETA caliber 2836-2. The watch is available with a PVD-coated stainless-steel case and bracelet (shown here), measuring 2,000 on the Vickers hardness scale, or with an uncoated steel case. The watch is 43 mm wide and 11 mm thick and water-resistant to 200 meters. The crown screws into the case and has two seals. The bezel rotates in one direction and is graduated in one-minute increments for the first quarter hour for easy timing of decompression stops. The strap has a safety extension clasp. The hands and markers are luminous; the crystal has a non-reflective coating. Price: \$1,450.

#### **I** Movado

Last year Movado introduced the first chronograph into its Master Collection. This year the brand came out with an all-black version of that chrono called the Master Black-Out Chronograph. The case, 45 mm in diameter and water-resistant to 300 meters, is made of PVD-coated steel. The dial is covered with a pattern reminiscent of a tire tread (the same pattern appears on the strap, which is made of rubber). The bezel is made of black sapphire; the indices and hands have a black luminescent coating. The movement is automatic; the rotor is also black, and decorated with an "M" (not visible, because the case-back is solid steel). The crown screws down. The crystal is made of sapphire and has a nonreflective coating on its inside. Price: \$4,495.











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#### Zenith

Zenith wowed the watch world last year with the introduction of its first Striking 10th watch, which made the most of its high-frequency El Primero movement with a chronograph seconds hand that raced around the dial once every 10 seconds. This year's El Primero Stratos Flyback Striking 10th has the same super-swift chrono capabilities, as well as a flyback function, presented in Zenith's new, sportier Stratos case, which is 45.5 mm in diameter and made of stainless steel. It has a black ceramic bezel and nonreflective sapphire crystals on both sides of the case. The silver sunray dial features three subdials of different colors to indicate the small seconds (at 9 o'clock), chronograph minutes (6 o'clock) and chronograph seconds (3 o'clock). The center-mounted red chronograph hand indicates the 1/10 seconds. The watch comes on a stainless steel bracelet or alligator leather strap. Prices start at \$7,400.



#### Stoläs

This two-year-old watch company's flagship model is the Harbormaster Genoa divers' watch, a Swiss-made timepiece with an ETA 2824-2 movement. The watch has a stainless-steel case with a screw-down crown and rotating bezel; the bezel has an engraved wave pattern and oneminute markers on a luminescent orange background in the first 15-minute quadrant; a green luminescent paint is used for the indices and numerals. The dial has an embossed pattern of a yacht and features a lightning-boltshaped seconds hand. The movement is visible through a sapphire caseback. The watch is delivered with a stainless-steel bracelet, canvas NATO strap and a black rubber strap with orange stitching; its price is \$1,499.

### IMKII

The Seafighter from MKII is based on a watch that was issued to German combat divers in the 1970s. The Seafighter contains an elaboré-grade ETA 2836-2, an automatic movement with a hacking feature. The case, made of polished stainless steel, is 42.35 mm wide and water-resistant to 200 meters. The crown has been placed at 4 o'clock, rather than its normal position at 3 o'clock, so it won't dig into the wearer's wrist. The markers and hands are coated with Super-LumiNova. In addition to the bracelet version shown here (\$849), the watch is also available with a rubber strap.





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Showcase 2011



# **I** Kobold

Kobold's new R.E. Byrd Automatic pays tribute to Admiral Richard Evelyn Byrd, the naval aviator who became the first man to reach the South Pole by air in November 1929. This retro-inspired watch features a 41-mm U.S.-made 316L stainless-steel case with a brushed finish and 100-meter water-resistance. The movement is an automatic-winding ETA 2824-A2 with a Glucydur balance, Nivarox 1 hairspring, and a 40-hour power reserve. The dials, available in Deep Black, Snow White and Fuselage Gray, are coated with anti-U.V. lacquer to help them stand the test of time. The scratchresistant, domed sapphire crystal is treated with purple-hued, nonreflective coating to enhance legibility. The watch is priced at \$1,450.



#### **I** Citizen

In 1987, Team Dennis Conner's Stars & Stripes won the America's Cup back from Australia, which had snatched it from the New York Yacht Club four years earlier. In preparation for that victory's 25th anniversary next year, Citizen has introduced its limited edition Stars & Stripes Sailhawk Yacht Timer watch. There will be 1,000 pieces made (\$575 each). The watch has a yacht-racing (i.e., countdown) timer, a chronograph accurate to 1/100-second and two world-time alarms. It gives the time and date in 22 time zones and has a rotating bezel. The wearer can switch between analog and digital time displays with the touch of a button. The watch is the first yacht timer to be powered by Citizen's Eco-Drive system, which converts light into electricity, thus eliminating the need for battery changes. Each watch is individually numbered and comes in a presentation box with a card bearing Dennis Conner's signature.

#### Victorinox

The Alliance Chronograph from Victorinox is a Swiss-made watch powered by a quartz movement capable of timing events to the nearest 1/10-second. The 42-mmdiameter, 316L stainless-steel case with screw-in caseback is water-resistant to 100 meters. Black, gray and silver dials with applied hour markers are protected by a scratchresistant, triple-coated sapphire crystal, and the hands are coated with luminescent material for nighttime legibility. Alliance chronographs are covered by a three-year warranty and are available on an assortment of leather straps and three-link bracelets with alternating brushed and polished finishes. Price: \$750 to \$925.



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# I Alpina

Alpina's partnership with the Italian Extreme 40 Catamaran racing team Niceforyou — led by skipper Alberto Barovier, who guided the BMW Oracle Racing trimaran to the 2010 America's Cup — inspired the Extreme 40 Yacht Timer, a new model with a sailing countdown function. The stainless-steel 44-mm Yacht Timer is powered by Caliber AL-880, developed in-

house by Alpina and based on the Sellita SW5000 chronograph movement. The unidirectional bezel surrounds a sapphire crystal, and the display back reveals a black PVD-coated rotor. Water resistance is 200 meters. Black and white dials are available, and you can choose from a rubber strap, three-link bracelet, or mesh bracelet. The watch is delivered in a special gift box with an Extreme 40 boat miniature. Price: \$2,795 to \$2,995.

#### Ernest Borel

The Athletic Collection from Ernest Borel contains this automatic chronograph powered by an ETA 7750 movement. It has a satin-finished case, 50 meters' water-resistance and a screwdown crown. The bezel is engraved with a tachymeter scale; the hands and markers are luminous. The watch is 42 mm in diameter and has a transparent back and a sapphire crystal with a nonreflective coating. Price: \$2,385.





Hamilton's new Khaki UTC line is inspired by the company's history supplying precision marine chronometers to the U.S. military. The watch's 42-mm stainless-steel case is water-resistant to 300 meters and houses an antimagnetic Swiss ETA 2893-2 movement. The pusher at 2 o'clock lets you choose from among the 24 available time zones, each identified by an International Air Transport Association (IATA) three-letter airport code. (For example, Eastern Standard Time in the U.S. is denoted by the familiar "JFK" identifier for New York's John F. Kennedy airport.) The codes are visible through an aperture at the edge of the dial at 9 o'clock. The dial is available in black and "old paper" yellow. The solid caseback bears the Hamilton crest. A sailcloth or leather strap completes the package. Price: \$1,295.

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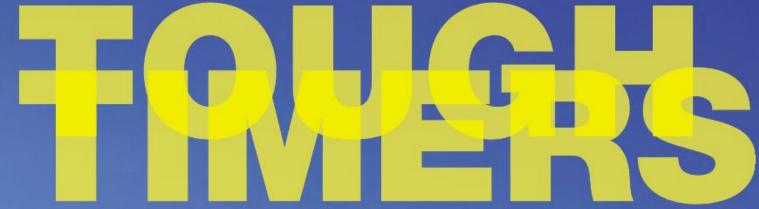


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TAG Heuer's Monaco Twenty-Four Calibre 36

#### **SCRAPES**

Scratches are to watches what the common cold is to humans: all but unavoidable. But some watches stand up much better than others to potentially abrasive objects. The difference lies in the hardness (measured in Vickers) of the materials from which they are made. Most watch cases are made of 316L stainless steel, which measures about 220 Vickers. But watches coated with DLC (diamond-like carbon) have a hardness of 2,000 to 3,000 Vickers (by comparison, diamond has a hardness of 10,000, the highest value on the Vickers scale). Strong, narrowly focused stresses — for example, a smack against a cliff wall can penetrate the coating. And because DLC is black, deep scratches are instantly visible. This so-called "eggshell effect" (i.e., a hard shell and a soft core) can be avoided only if the underlying material is as hard or nearly as hard as the DLC coating.

DLC coatings, used by many watch brands, are applied using a PVD (physical vapor deposition) method. In it, amorphous carbon material in gaseous form is introduced into a vacuum chamber, where it is deposited onto the case's surface. Amorphous carbon shares properties with graphite (its black color) and diamond (its hardness).

There are various methods for hardening steel other than coating it. One of them, used by the German brand Sinn, incorporates a technique originally developed for other applications. In it, carbon is diffused into steel, where it fills gaps in the molecular lattice structure and thus creates a hard surface. Depending on the hardness of the original material, this method can produce a hardness of 1,200 to 1,500 on the Vickers scale. (Sinn calls the steel produced this way "Tegimented" steel.) No eggshell effect occurs; the case's hardness decreases gradually with depth, not suddenly, as with DLC coatings. Ice-hardening is another way to steel more scratch-resistant. Damasko, also from Germany, uses this method to produce cases measuring up to 740 Vickers. The entire case is hardened by the process, so there is no eggshell effect here, either.

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Cases and bezels made of ceramic are also resistant to scratching, thanks to their hardness of 1,200 to 2,000 Vickers. But the material, which is usually based on aluminum oxide or zirconium oxide, is somewhat more vulnerable to breakage than steel.

Incidentally, the hardest watch case ever made, one that earned a listing in *Guinness World Records* in 2004, was the one used in Rado's Model V10K, so named for the case's 10,000 measurement on the Vickers scale. Rado achieved that highest-possible rating by coating the watch with artificial diamond.

Of course, it isn't just cases, but also crystals that can be made scratch-resistant. Crystals made of synthetic sapphire have a hardness of 2,000 Vickers. Acrylic, at just 20 Vickers, is the softest material used for crystals, followed by mineral glass (400 Vickers), hardened mineral glass (900 Vickers) and synthetic sapphire.

#### **SHOCKS**

Shocks are far more dangerous than scratches; they can take a watch completely out of commission. Strong shocks or vibrations such as those a watch might encounter when its wearer rides a mountain bike or plays tennis can knock hands off stems, push an index out of position (thus interfering with the watch's fine regulation), bend a hairspring out of shape or break a balance's arbor.

Some brands have developed watches that can stand up to very powerful knocks and jolts. Jaeger-LeCoultre has placed a safety band around the hair-spring of its Master Compressor Extreme LAB 2: the band limits the motion of the spring when the watch receives a shock. The watch also has two screws to hold





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the hairspring stud. The hairspring itself is made of silicon and thus weighs only one-third as much as a conventional metal hairspring. It is therefore less vulnerable to shocks. Jolts are also buffered by the case, which combines an inner container and exterior housing, both made of the titanium alloy TiVan15.

Glashütte Original has also developed an unusual shock-resistance system. Four buffering elements made of elastomers are positioned between the case and the movement-holder ring, where they absorb 60 percent of the impact from blows. The case, which is made of stainless steel, is covered with rubber to further protect it from shocks.

For its Monaco Twenty-Four Calibre 36, TAG Heuer developed what it calls an Advanced Dynamic Absorber System. The movement is suspended at all four corners inside the square case. Four plastic buffers protect the movement against shocks and especially against vibrations in the frequency range of one to 10 Hz.

Unfortunately, no mechanical watch can be made completely invulnerable to shocks. That can only be achieved with a quartz watch with no moving parts, such as the Casio G-Shock.

### **MAGNETIC FIELDS**

Magnetism can be as damaging to watches as shocks. Even brief exposure to a strong magnetic field can affect the watch's balance and hairspring and throw the watch's rate way off. Magnetic fields lurk in ordinary everyday life: loudspeakers, induction ovens and electric motors all emit them.

The ISO standard 764 specifies that an anti-magnetic watch must be able to pass through a magnetic field with an intensity of 4,800 A/m (amperes per meter) without stopping or suffering a rate deviation of more than 30 seconds per day. The typical, modern mechanical watch meets this standard.

But in many situations, this standard isn't adequate. To achieve much greater protection from magnetic fields (up to 80,000 A/m), some manufacturers place their watch movements inside an inner case of soft iron. The case prevents nearly all magnetism from penetrating into

**CHRONOSWISS** 

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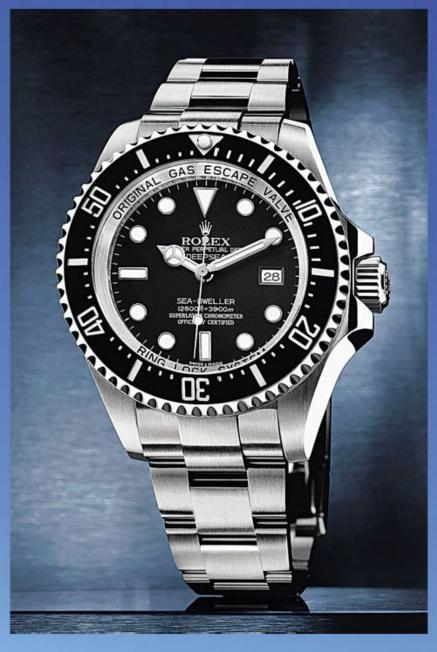




# WATCH VS. NATURE Tough Timepieces

The CX Swiss Military Watch's 20,000 Feet model





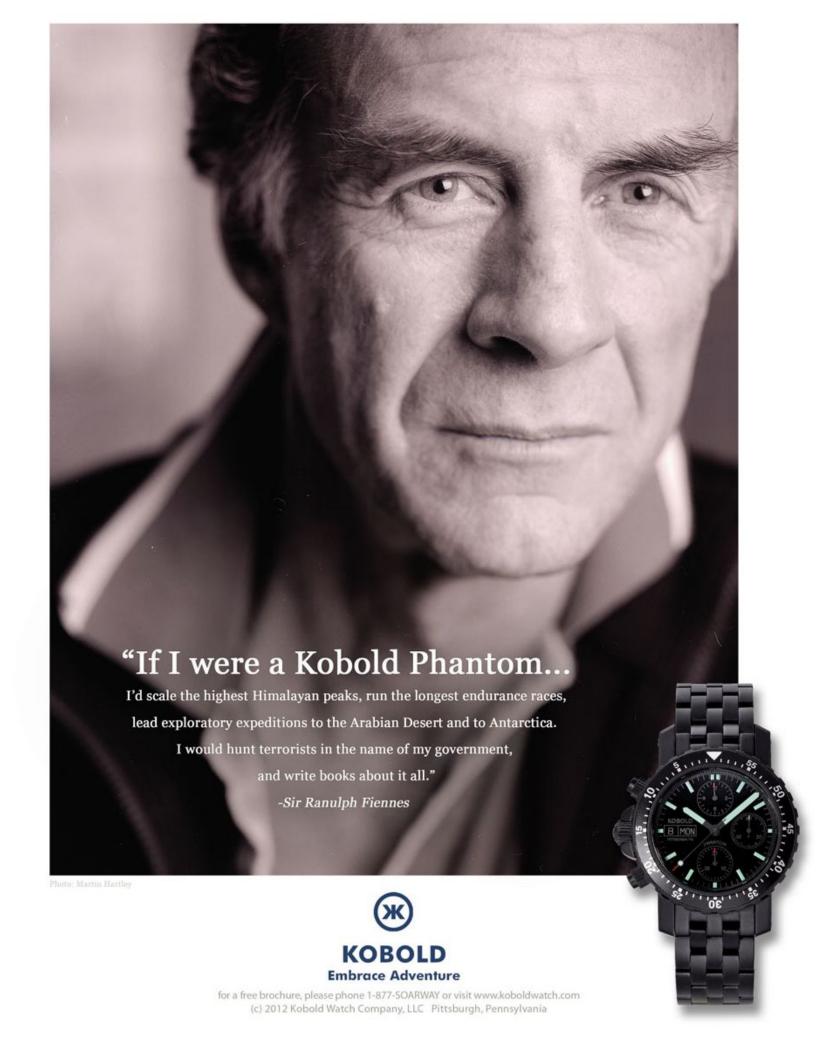
the movement. (This type of enclosure, used in many applications in addition to watches, is called a "Faraday cage.") The protection is best when the iron case has as few openings as possible. Of course, there must always be holes for the stem of the crown and the staffs of the hands, but additional openings (such as for a date display or a chronograph's counters and push-pieces) make the shield less effective. Brands that use such enclosures include IWC, for its Pilot's Watch Double Chronograph Top Gun and Ingenieur Automatic Mission Earth; and Rolex, in its Milgauss. Rolex takes the additional steps of incorporating a Parachrom hairspring, made from a niobium-zirconium alloy with a coating of blue oxide, which is nearly unaffected by magnetic fields, and a pallet fork and escape wheel made from an amorphous nickel-phosphorous alloy that also resists magnetism.

### WATER PRESSURE

To merit the label "divers' watch," a watch must be water-resistant to 100 meters (about 330 feet), according to ISO standard 6425. To be on the safe side, though, many in the watch industry recommend that a watch worn for recreational scuba diving be rated at 200 meters, or 660 feet. (The reason these figures are so high — recreational scuba divers rarely go deeper than 40 meters, or 130 feet — is that they refer to static pressure only: the pressure the watch would experience if it were motionless in still water. When dynamic pressure, the pressure created by the diver moving, is added, the total water pressure exerted on the watch increases significantly.)

Many watches go far beyond this level of water-resistance. The standard way to do so is by making the case and crystal very thick. But some companies have come up with more elegant solutions. Rolex was able to make its Sea-Dweller Deepsea, which has a water-resistance

The Rolex Sea-Dweller Deepse





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level of 3,900 meters (nearly 13,000 feet), more than 10 percent slimmer than it otherwise would have been by using an entirely new case construction. It consists of three pressure-absorbing elements: a 5.5mm-thick sapphire crystal, a 3.28-mmthick back made of grade 5 titanium, and an inner ring (on which both of them rest) made of Biodur-108 steel. These components suffer three to four times less distortion under pressure than the steel used for the rest of the case. The result is a watch that is "only" 18 mm thick.

Sinn uses a different method to increase the water-resistance of its UX model. It fills the watch's case with liquid, which because it cannot be compressed makes the watch pressure-resistant to just about any depth. The liquid expands at higher temperatures, so the back is composed of two parts and contains a membrane that allows the inner part to move slightly outward. The watch contains a quartz movement; the liquid would have interfered with the oscillations of a balance. The watch is guaranteed to be water-resistant to 5,000 meters.



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Tourbillon Watches inc City of commerce., Ca 90040 855-770-8900 / 323-720-8900 Info@tourbillonwatchesinc.com Price from \$2,300 to \$3,900 ance equivalent) value. Steel with a PRE value of 32 is considered capable of withstanding seawater. The commonly used 316L stainless steel has a PRE value of just 24. Watches made with 316L should therefore be rinsed after each exposure to salt water. Perspiration is as aggressive as salt water in causing pitting.

Some watches are made with alloys having a much higher PRE value. Rolex uses 904L steel, which has a PRE value of 35. Titanium, on the other hand, is totally unaffected by salt water.

### **EXTREME TEMPERATURES**

Very high or low temperatures can jeopardize a watch's ability to keep accurate time. Some companies use special lubricants to keep their watches running smoothly at extreme temperatures. Ball Watch, for instance, uses specially blended oils in its Engineer Hydrocarbon models that enable them to operate at temperatures ranging from -40° to +60° Celsius, or -40° to +140° Fahrenheit. Sinn guarantees that its watches will function at temperatures from -45° to +80° Celsius, or -49° to +176° Fahrenheit, also thanks to the lubricant used in the movement.

### **DARKNESS**

A watch that's made for extreme conditions must be legible in the dark. One way to make watch hands and markers visible in poor or no light is to coat them with a phosphorescent paint (Super-LumiNova is the one used most often). The paint must first be charged by exposing the watch dial to light, after which it will continue to glow for some hours, or even all night, if there is enough paint on the hands and markers.

Tritium gas tubes are another way to make a watch legible in darkness. The inside of the tubes is coated with a luminous material that glows when it is excited by the tritium gas. These tubes will continue to emit light even after they have been kept in total darkness for 10 years. Unlike luminous paint, they do not need to be charged by exposure to light. Ball Watch uses tritium-gas tubes on all of its watches. The Luminox and Traser brands also use the technology. The latter is owned by the Swiss company Mb-Mi-

The Breitling Emergency

crotec, which makes the gas tubes for Traser and other watch brands.

### **EMERGENCIES**

If your boat capsizes or you're forced to land your plane in uninhabited territory, you need to call for help. One way is with the Breitling Emergency watch. It has an emergency transmitter on its back. To activate it, the wearer unscrews the large safety button and pulls out the antenna. For the next 48 hours, the transmitter will send out an SOS signal on the emergency frequency of 121.5 megahertz. If you're on level terrain or floating on a calm sea, a search plane within 100 miles of you will be able to pick up your signal. The watch, which has a quartz movement certified by COSC, is worn by many pilots who fly with military squadrons such as the Patrouille Suisse and the Patrouille de France.





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# ONE Munich-based UTS has carved out a niche: German-made professional divers' watches, all with cases made in-house by engineer Nicolaus Spinner. BRAND

ost of us, when we're looking for our ideal watch, simply do our homework - visit retailers, read magazines and catalogs, browse websites - before finally settling on the one that bests suits our tastes. But what if nothing on the market offers the exact combination of design touches and technical details that we're seeking? This is the situation that faced Nicolaus Spinner a few years ago. Unlike the vast majority of us, Spinner, a mechanical engineer from Munich, Germany, whose company makes CNC machines and tools for automobile manufacturers, defense contractors and watch companies, had the means and expertise to do something about it. Rather than settle on something "close enough," Spinner decided to go into his workshop,

BY MARK BERNARDO

order the Swiss components he needed, and make the exact watch he wanted — the crowning touch of which would be a case that he would design and manufacture himself.

Spinner's first homemade watch, which he called the Commander, had a manual-winding movement, a screwdown crown with a special sealing system and removable lugs that enabled the timepiece to be worn as a wristwatch or pocketwatch. And while the Commander was not a divers' watch, it boasted a case that, at the time, was one of the most water-resistant in the watch world, to 3,000 meters. A longtime lover of watches whose job had given him an appreciation of how they work, Spinner's ambition was not, at first, an entrepreneurial one;







Stephen Newman Nicolaus Spinner

rather, it was solely to make one watch that he would want to wear.

However, Spinner could not resist posting pictures and information about his watch project on his personal website, where they eventually caught the eye of a fellow watch lover and engineer (albeit of the computer variety) in the United States, Stephen Newman. Newman had spent nearly two decades in the tech business — starting software companies and helping to launch internet start-ups and he had been a watch hobbyist for even longer, starting in childhood when he used to take apart and reassemble the insides of the mechanical clocks his parents collected. While surfing the Web for watch news, he happened upon Spinner's site, and was intrigued not by the Commander itself but by the other project that Spinner was tinkering with, a manualwind chronograph. Newman contacted Spinner, offered to buy that watch, and thereafter offered to help the German turn his hobby into a business.

That company, founded in 1998, is called UTS. The initials call to mind some sort of government agency, but they actually stand for Uhren Technik Spinner, German for "Watch Technology" plus the founder's surname. Newman, whose title is president and CEO of UTS Watches, Inc. North America, is the brand's face in the U.S.

y UTS watch 122 WatchTime December 201

Except for the variety and number of watches produced — UTS now makes about 200 pieces per year, and most models are limited to 200 pieces, total — little has changed since Spinner first assembled his personal Commander watch. All UTS watches are assembled in the factory outside Munich where Spinner (and his brothers, with whom he co-owns it) continues to produce machinery for other industrial clients. They contain Swiss-made mechanical movements, primarily from ETA, but also from a few other ébauche makers. And Spinner — all on his own, with no assistants — not only assembles them but mills all of their cases, on his own CNC machines, from single blocks of German stainless steel. This is no mean feat; many larger watch companies, even those producing expensive luxury models, use the more common, more industrialized stamping method to make their cases, which involves forcing heated metal into molds and dies. Spinner's process is far more hands-on and far more laborintensive. The finished cases have a hightech, robust look, with the solid casebacks and separately milled lugs securely affixed by the brand's trademark hex screws. Spinner applies the cases' brushed finishes by hand.

It was Newman who convinced Spinner to apply his breakthrough development, the hand-machined, 3,000-meterwater-resistant case, to a model where it would be of most interest and use, a divers' watch. It is this type of watch for which



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UTS is best known today, and the company makes several variations of that style, distinguished by their levels of water-resistance. UTS makes two watches rated to depths of 1,000 meters. One is the 1000M Dive Watch (\$2,600; all prices are manufacturer's list prices), a model that has been recently upgraded with a slightly larger dial and a redesigned bezel. The new dial has a two-layered appearance, with a galvanic black finish over an inner sunray pattern (on the black-dialed models referred to as "Black Horizon," on the blue-dialed ones as "Pacific Horizon"). Its movement is an automatic ETA 2824-2, which Spinner has adjusted to five positions. The other model, the GMT Dive Watch Professional 1000M (\$3,250), uses the same case (43 mm in diameter and 14.5 mm thick, with an extra-thick, nonreflective-coated sapphire crystal) but contains the automatic ETA 2893-2 movement, which has a GMT function. The hands and indices, including the red GMT hand, are coated with a thick layer of blue Super-LumiNova, so both the current time and the time in a second time zone are readable in the dark or deep underwater. UTS says it will make a handful of models that also include a 24-hour bezel, effectively giving the wearer a third time-zone option.

The 2000M Dive Watch (\$3,250) not only has twice the water-resistance as the 1000M models; it also has a slightly bigger case (44-mm diameter and 16.5 mm thick) and is the only UTS divers' watch with a helium-release valve. Otherwise, the watch has similar attributes, including an engraved bezel with 60 click posi-



The 1000M Dive Watch

tions, a thick sapphire crystal, Super-LumiNova on the hands and markers, and a screw-down crown. It also uses the same ETA 2824-2 movement.

Additional technical details were necessary to give the 3000M Dive Watch which, of course, actually preceded those other divers' models — its impressive level of water-resistance (rated at 3,000 meters, but like all UTS watches, it is actually tested beyond those specifications). The case is 43 mm in diameter and 16.5 mm thick; the crystal is one millimeter thicker than that of the 2000M (5 mm). It also has a specially constructed bidirectional bezel, affixed by hex screws, that turns by a ceramic ball-bearing system and has a clever locking mechanism, devised by Spinner, at 2 o'clock. The crystal has an extra level of security, held in place by a stainless-steel ring that is affixed to the case by seven additional hex screws. The screw-down crown is at 4 o'clock. The watch is listed at \$4,500.

UTS also introduced a chronograph, the 600M Chronograph Diver (\$4,000), which is powered by the reliable ETA 7750 automatic chronograph movement and uses the same case as the 2000M Dive Watch. To help this watch achieve its 600-meter water-resistance, Spinner invented a new locking system for the chronograph pushers: instead of screwing them down to lock them, you unscrew them upward.

Not all of UTS's models are technically divers' watches. The Adventure GMT (\$4,000), for example, doesn't have a rotatable bezel, but it is still water-resistant to 500 meters. It also has one of the largest UTS cases, at 45 mm in diameter; it has to be big to accommodate the big movement inside, ETA's automatic Valgranges A07.171, with a GMT complication and 42-hour power reserve. There are also manual-wind Adventure models (\$3,000), which contain the Unitas 6497 movement. The red GMT hand and GMT scale stand out against the galvanic, sunray-patterned black dial.

As perhaps his crowning technical achievement, Spinner has even developed a tourbillon watch that can descend to depths of 1,000 meters. The UTS 1,000 Meters Tourbillon has a manual-wind tourbillon movement, the STT 13.75, developed by the specialist movement atelier formerly known as Progress Watch and now owned by Boyet, which gives the watch an impressive power reserve of 110 hours. The movement's decorations - including skeletonized bridges and cocks, engine-turned Clous de Paris and hand-engraved surfaces, and flame-blued screws — are visible through a sapphire caseback. The list price for this very limited-production watch is \$45,000.

UTS watches are only available for purchase on the company's website, www.utswatches.com, which also features testimonials posted there by the brand's hardcore fans. While Spinner is no longer making watches only for himself, he is still making them for a passionate few.



Work in progress: UTS cases are all milled from solid blocks of German steel.



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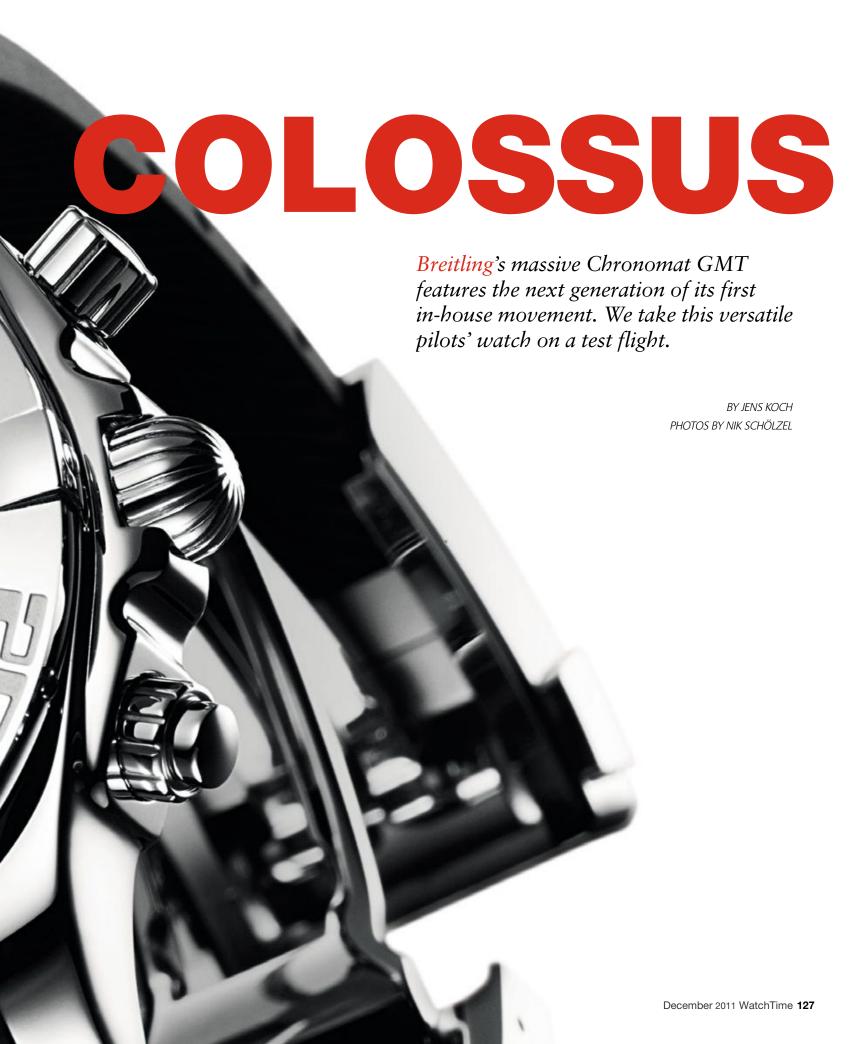
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t first glance, the Breitling Chronomat GMT reminded us of an imposing SUV, like the Porsche Cayenne. Looking at the watch's highly polished, 47-mm-diameter case, one can only admire its bold design while at the same time being stunned by its immodesty. One thing is clear: no one really *needs* this much watch. But if that's what you like, why not? And, unlike with an SUV, you won't go broke filling up its tank.

The Chronomat clearly belongs in the high-end segment of the watch market. The rotating bezel, with 12 carefully polished screws along the edge; the highly detailed, exquisitely finished dial; and the precisely fitting folding clasp with Breitling logo are signs of excellent quality and execution. The polished elegance of the case, bezel, clasp, markers and hands complements the many sporty features, like the screw-down pushers, the perforated rubber strap and, of course, the watch's sheer size.

THE WATCH CONTAINS Breitling Caliber 04, the next generation of the company's first in-house movement, Caliber 01, introduced two years ago. Caliber 01, which has a chronograph function, made its debut in another Chronomat model and in a handful of limited editions, and now powers another Breitling model, the Navitimer, as well as the new Transocean, which shows off the movement through a sapphire caseback. Caliber 04, which includes a dual-time-zone complication as well as a chronograph, makes its first appearance in the Chronomat GMT.

The Chronomat GMT demonstrates Breitling's ability to link functionality with contemporary design. The richness of detail is especially noteworthy. For example, at the dial's center is a square whose edges are defined by the centers of the subdials. The applied markers also point toward and help define these edges as they spread along the square's periphery. The subdial hands repeat the square shape at their centers. Even the raised indices on the bezel echo the square shape. The typography of the numerals on the subdials and the bezel, with its rectangular zero, also fits the pattern. A total of three different numeral fonts are used on the watch for the tachymeter track, the subdials and the 24-hour track (which mirrors the typography on the bezel). Although the font on the bezel is rather unorthodox, it contributes to the watch's overall feeling of boldness.

Reading the time and date from the dial of our test watch was, unfortunately, difficult. The contrast between the silver hands and the silvery beige color of the dial is very minimal. The

### **SPECS**

### **BREITLING CHRONOMAT GMT**

Manufacturer: Breitling Chronometrie, allée du Laser 10, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. Switzerland

Reference number: AB0410

Functions: Hours, minutes, seconds, date, chronograph with seconds, 12-hour and 30-minute totalizers, second time zone, unidirectional bezel

Movement: Caliber 04, automatic; 28,800 vph; 47 jewels; Kif shock absorber; Glucydur balance; fine regulator with eccentric; diameter = 30 mm; 70-hour power reserve

Case: Stainless steel, sapphire crystal with double-sided nonreflective coating, fully threaded stainless-steel caseback, screwdown crown and pushers, water-resistant to 500 meters

Strap and clasp: Rubber, with stainlesssteel folding clasp with two deployant buttons

Rate results: (Deviations in seconds per day, without/with chronograph switched on)

Dial up	3	5
Dial down	5	6
Crown up	3	7
Crown down	3	0
Crown left	5	-2
Crown right	0	11
Greatest deviation:	5	13
Average deviation:	+3.2	+4.5
Average amplitude:		
flat positions	272°	243°
hanging positons	248°	217°

**Dimensions:** Diameter = 47 mm, height = 18.7 mm, weight = 200 grams

Variations: Stainless steel bracelet (\$9,820), calfskin strap (\$8,635)

**Price:** \$8,570







delicate chronograph hand is even harder to see. The date and the 24-hour hand, with its large red tip, are easier to discern. The dials on all the other versions of this model (a total of six are available) are in darker colors, and thus easier to read.

The light color of the dial presents no problem in the dark. The hour and minute hands glow brightly, as do the hour markers (12 o'clock is indicated by two squares) and the zero marker on the rotating bezel. Even the chronograph seconds hand has a small triangle of luminous material and is a quick way to check that the watch is still running.

BEFORE STARTING the chronograph function you first need to unscrew the pushers, a step many will find inconvenient. However, this feature allows Breitling to guarantee a water-resistance level of up to 500 meters for this watch. The start pusher is not much easier to push than one on a chronograph with a standard cam system, like the Valjoux 7750, even though Caliber 04 has a column wheel, which means it should require less force to start and be easier to operate. The stop and reset functions work more smoothly.

The crown must also be unscrewed before using it; its fluted exterior makes this easy. In its initial position, the crown is used to wind the movement. In its first pulled-out position, it adjusts the hour hand in hour increments and easily sets the date backward or forward. It's not quite as direct as a quick-date adjuster, but still quick. This function also allows the wearer to easily set the time to a new time zone when traveling. The crown's last pulled-out position operates the 24-hour hand, which pilots will set to UTC (the standard time used for all aviation-related information); a hack mechanism ensures exact synchronization. Return the crown to the first position to set the hour hand to local time. Pilots will find the second-time-zone indication to be extremely helpful.

The rotating bezel can also make a pilot's time in the cockpit simpler. At the start of the flight the zero marker on the bezel is lined up with the tip of the minute hand to record the exact start time. When flying according to visual flight rules, this makes it easier to see the length of the flight in minutes and show when the pilot should be on the lookout for the next visual landmark on the calculated route. As on a divers' watch, the bezel can only be turned in one direction. This is of no use to a pilot, but because of the Chronomat's high level of water resistance, it can also be used for diving. The bezel ratchets in 240 increments; the noise it makes as it turns is somewhat scratchy, but it's easy to turn and ratchets securely with no play.

In addition to the bezel, we found another detail usually found only on divers' watches — the finely adjustable strap extension integrated in the clasp. Even though it doesn't expand very far, it still allows the wearer to adjust the strap to the perfect length. The strap can even be shortened while on the wrist by simply pushing an end of the strap into the clasp and gradually tightening it. To extend the strap, open the clasp and push down the strap lock to release.

The folding clasp has two deployant buttons and is also very attractive, easy to operate and superbly executed. The rubber

### **SCORES**

### **BREITLING CHRONOMAT GMT**

Strap and clasp (max. 10 points): The perforated rubber strap is well made and the clasp is attractive and sturdy, with a complex design and perfectly polished finish.

Operation (5): Easy to operate, with a fluted crown and rotating bezel, hack mechanism, and hour hand adjustable in hour increments. Chrono pushers must be unscrewed before using.

Case (10): Rounded and carefully polished sides, high degree of water-resistance. The execution of the rotating bezel and caseback deserves special mention.

Design (15): Contemporary, striking Breitling pilots'-watch design with various tracks and polished surfaces. Impressive size.

Legibility (5): Somewhat low contrast between hands and dial, but all essential elements are highly visible at night.

13

Wearing comfort (10): Comfortable for its size, thanks to the supple rubber strap and smooth case. The adjustable strap extension in the clasp makes it simple to find an exact fit.

Movement (20): Caliber 04, with column wheel, vertical clutch, jumping date and long power reserve, is state-of-the-art and nicely decorated.

18

Rate results (10): Minimal gain in most positions. Rates are poorer when the chronograph function is engaged.

Overall value (15): Priced fairly for a big pilots' watch with a manufacture movement from a respected, well-known brand.

TOTAL: 86 POINTS

strap with perforations goes well with this style of watch, making it more of a versatile sports watch than strictly a pilots' watch. Thanks to the suppleness of the strap and the variable extension feature, the Chronomat GMT is surprisingly comfortable to wear despite its impressive size and weight (200 grams). However, even by today's standards, the case is extra-large and must be worn snugly on the wrist to avoid slipping.

THE BEAUTIFULLY engraved caseback, with its Breitling logo, contributes to the overall impression of high quality, although a sapphire window to provide a view of this still-rare chronograph movement would surely have had greater appeal for mechanical-watch fans. The movement's decorative finishes are certainly not overdone, but they include côtes de Genève on the automatic bridge, polished levers and screws, and a sunburst finish on the rotor.

The ball-bearing rotor is bidirectional. The watch has a power reserve of almost three days. An elegant column wheel controls the chronograph functions. The modern vertical clutch ensures that the chronograph seconds hand starts immediately. Breitling has improved the reset function with a patented, automatic centering system for the hammers. The date display jumps instantaneously. The escape wheel is supported by conical pivots and cap jewels to reduce friction in the horizontal positions.

Breitling also matches the hairspring to the balance wheel in order to produce greater rate accuracy — an important goal for Breitling, whose policy is that every movement in its watches must meet COSC's specific quality standards for chronometer certification.

With this in mind, our expectations for the rate results were high. On the Witschi Chronoscope X1 timing machine, the greatest deviation between the various positions was measured at five seconds. The average deviation (the mean value of all positions) was +3.2 seconds per day, which still falls within the acceptable range of a chronometer. When the chronograph function was engaged, the rates were slightly less impressive and the amplitude decreased considerably, but overall the rate results were good.

The Chronomat GMT costs \$8,570. A Chronomat 44, without a dual-time-zone function and with the same strap, costs only \$8,010. This means an additional charge of \$560 for the second timezone and a case whose diameter is 3 mm larger. Still, the overall value remains high. Prices can be much higher for a chronograph with a *manufacture* movement and the range of functions offered here.

Even with this watch's many positive aspects, its enormous size may frighten away some potential customers. On the other hand, others will undoubtedly love it for the same reason.



# DEEP BLUE (SS)



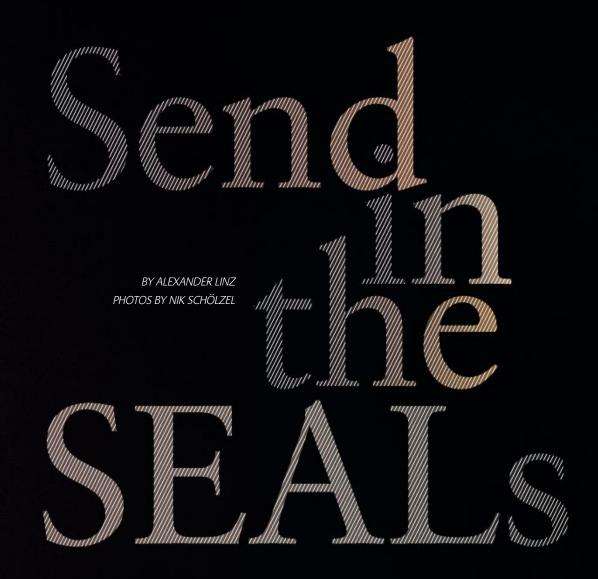
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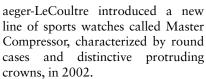


Luminous





Jaeger-LeCoultre has introduced a limited-edition Master Compressor Diving watch designed with the input of United States Navy SEALs. We put it through the WatchTime gauntlet.



In recent years, watch manufacturers have taken to partnering with various elite military units to emphasize the toughness and professional utility of even their most luxurious sport models. For this Master Compressor Diving watch, Jaeger-LeCoultre teamed up with the U.S. Navy SEALs. The typical Navy SEAL is trained to perform equally effectively in the air, on land,

and in the water (hence the acronym, which stands for Sea, Air and Land). His equipment must be rugged and always reliable. At the start of the project, Jaeger-LeCoultre outfitted several SEALs with Master Compressor divers' watches and took note of their feedback. For example, the testers remarked that the cases and rotating bezels reflected light too strongly and that the surfaces of the watches should be less shiny and more matte. The SEALs also suggested that the construction of the bezels needed rethinking, because they sometimes separated from the cases when the watches were subjected to the SEALs' tough daily regimens. Jaeger-LeCoultre created a modified version of the Master Compressor, based on their suggestions, at its headquarters in Le Sentier, Switzerland. Called the Master Compressor Diving Automatic Navy SEALs, it is limited to 1,500 pieces, and engineered to be tough and sturdy under all conditions, including under water, to depths of 300 meters. We got hold of one to test.

In addition to toughness and absolute reliability, the legibility of its time display is the single most important aspect of a divers' watch. Jaeger-LeCoultre deserves praise in this area, because it would be difficult to imagine better styling for the dial and hands. The high contrast between matte black and white, the clear typography of the numerals, and the shape of the hands combine to ensure perfect legibility of the time under all conditions — even without nonreflective treatment on both surfaces of the sapphire crystal. In the dark, the watch glows so brightly and for such a long time that it almost seems as though there were a light source behind it. Jaeger-LeCoultre has applied

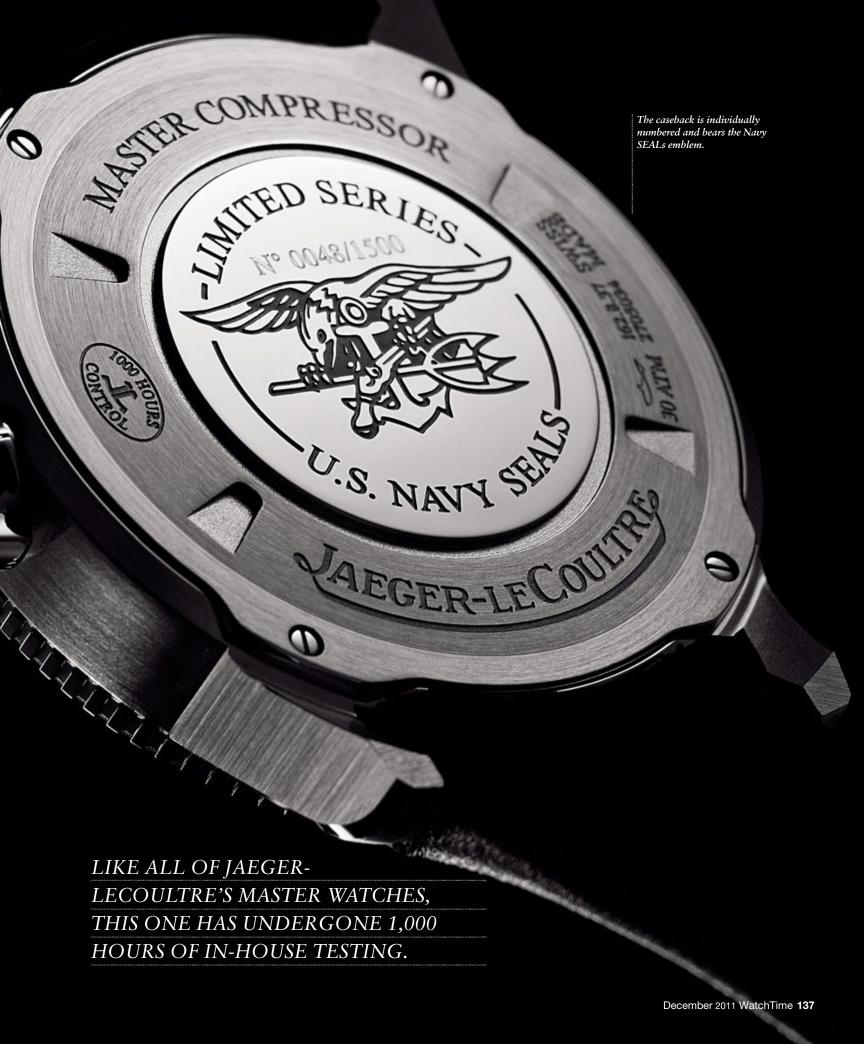
### Pros

- + Well-equipped for diving
- + Dial is easy to read
- + Bright, long-lasting luminosity in the dark
- + Very comfortable on the wrist

### Cons

- Sharp-edged lugs
- Large rate variations between the various
- Leather strap is not seamlessly integrated into the





# SPECS

# JAEGER-LECOULTRE MASTER COMPRESSOR DIVING NAVY SEALS

**Manufacturer:** Manufacture Jaeger-LeCoultre, Rue de la Golisse 8, CH-1347, Le Sentier. Switzerland

Le Sentier, Switzerland

Reference number: 162.8.37

Functions: Hours, minutes, central

seconds, date

Movement: JLC Caliber 899, automatic; diameter = 26.6 mm; height = 3.3 mm; 32 jewels; screw balance with four weights; self-compensating Nivarox-1 flat hairspring; 28,800 vph; Kif shock absorption; angle of lift = 48°; rotor winds in one direction of rotation and has a segment made of 22k gold; one barrel; 45-hour power reserve; 219 components

**Case:** Massive, tripartite, steel case with four screws in threaded back; screwed crown; sapphire crystal with nonreflective treatment on one surface; waterresistant to 300 meters

**Strap and clasp:** Leather with pronged buckle

**Rate results** (Deviations in seconds per day, fully wound/after 24 hours):

Dial up	+7		+2
Dial down	+8		+4
Crown up	-2		-1
Crown down	+3	-1	
Crown left	+2	-1	
Crown right	-4		-5
Greatest deviatio	n		
of rate:	12		9
Average deviation	n: +2		0
Mean amplitude:		om 2004/19-000-00	
Flat positions		320°	261°
Hanging positi	ions	270°	216°

**Dimensions:** Diameter = 42 mm, height = 14.2 mm, weight = 102 grams

Limited edition of 1,500 pieces

Price: \$8,800

a new, extra-powerful Super-LumiNova to the numerals, indices, and hands, as well as to the little marking triangle on the rotatable ceramic bezel, which clicks cleanly into place in one-minute increments. Each click is rich and resonant, a contrast with the weak clicks of so many other divers' watches.

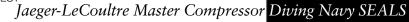
The surface of the steel case is entirely matte finished and embellished with a longitudinal, abraded pattern. This gives the watch an attractive technical look and helps to reduce glare. The only downside to the case, from a comfort standpoint, is that the lower edges of the lugs are a bit too sharp. The play between the lugs and the leather strap could also be improved. When the watch is strapped onto the wrist, an unattractive crevice appears between the flank of the case and the matching shape of the strap: an automotive journalist would probably complain about the gap dimensions. If the strap fit more neatly into the case, it would probably be somewhat stiffer, but after a few days of wear it would develop the necessary "give," and the crevice would be much neater and more narrow.

The choice of a pronged buckle over a folding clasp was a wise one for this watch. The former provides greater security and also makes it simpler to adjust the strap's length. The high-

The watch's pronged buckle offers more security and is easier to adjust than a folding clasp.







The rotating ceramic bezel clicks neatly into place in one-minute increments.



# JAEGER-LECOULTRE MASTER COMPRESSOR DIVING NAVY SEALS

Strap and clasp (max. 10 points): Well-crafted leather strap. The matte pronged buckle, with its striped pattern, perfectly matches the case; the clasp is secure and easy to operate.

**Operation (5):** Screwed crown; open or closed status of crown is shown by white or red mark. When open, time and date are easy to set.

Case (10): Except for the somewhat sharp lower edges on the lugs, the steel case is impeccably made. The high-quality, neatly crafted ceramic bezel snaps cleanly and firmly into each increment. 8

**Design (15):** Utilitarian design without many frills. The matte, non-reflective case does justice to this watch's intended purpose. 12

**Legibility (5):** The time is easy to read under all conditions. Highly and lastingly luminous in the dark.

Wearing comfort (10): A diameter of 42 millimeters, relative slimness, and comparatively low weight are an ideal combination for a sporty watch. This one fits very well around the wrist.

**Movement (20):** *Manufacture* Caliber 899 is a solid base caliber and is highly resistant to shocks. The plates and bridges are handsomely decorated. **16** 

Rate results (10): The overall results indicate that this watch had been properly adjusted, but the rate differences between the flat and hanging positions were too large, which caused us to subtract a few points.

Overall value (15): No mere wannabe sport watch, this well-made divers' watch is as handsome as it is tough. Its price is reasonable.

TOTAL:

**84 POINTS** 





# THE AVERAGE DAILY RATE WAS GOOD, BUT THERE WERE LARGE DEVIATIONS BETWEEN THE FLAT AND HANGING POSITIONS.

quality leather strap on our tested watch sheds water, but if you're looking for even greater water resistance, you can swap it for an optional, linked rubber strap, which gives the watch a very different look.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE Caliber 899 ticks beneath the black, galvanized dial. This movement represents a further development of the well-known and time-honored Caliber 889/2. Jaeger-LeCoultre no longer uses the 889/2, but Audemars Piguet uses a reworked version of it as a base caliber for its Royal Oak Offshore modular chronograph. Like that of its predecessor, the 899's balance completes 28,800 semi-oscillations per hour, but the newer caliber also boasts various improvements. The rotor, which winds the mainspring in one direction of rotation, is borne on ceramic bearings and requires neither maintenance nor lubrication. The gears for the rotor have been newly developed: specially shaped teeth reduce friction and increase efficiency. The barrel has been enlarged and the gear train has been reworked. The teeth on the gears have been given a different profile that improves the transmission of energy and reduces play, thus saving energy and increasing the power reserve to 45 hours. Four screws along the rim of the balance are used to finely adjust the rate. The stud is welded to the hairspring by a laser. All of these details increase reliability and guarantee a more regular rate. Furthermore, like all of Jaeger-LeCoultre's Master watches, this one has undergone 1,000 hours of in-house test-

Surprisingly, Caliber 899 didn't entirely live up to our lofty expectations when we tested the watch on an electronic Witschi timing machine. We discovered large deviations between the flat and hanging positions, both when fully wound and after 24 hours. And its maximum difference of 12 seconds among the six tested positions isn't anything to brag about.

To determine whether these results were an aberration, we tested two additional models, each also containing Caliber 899, and found similar problems: the greatest deviation, the so-called "delta," was very large. The average daily rate, however, was good, and this was confirmed on the wrist, where the watch gained very slightly — just a few seconds per day.

All in all, the Master Compressor U.S. Navy SEALs deserves a good report card. The dial's legibility is especially top-notch, and we loved its appealingly understated look. Thanks to the input of actual Navy SEALs, the watch is well equipped for underwater use, and is thus unlikely to disappoint professional divers, whether or not they are in elite military units.





### **BURAN STINGRAY**

This watch's exterior, which calls to mind a Russian battleship or submarine, speaks to the Buran brand's Russian heritage, but inside, it's all Swiss. Moscowbased Volmax, which owns Buran, has moved the brand's headquarters to Switzerland, and the Stingray, an amalgam of Russian design and Swiss time-keeping technology, is a full-fledged "Swiss made" timepiece.

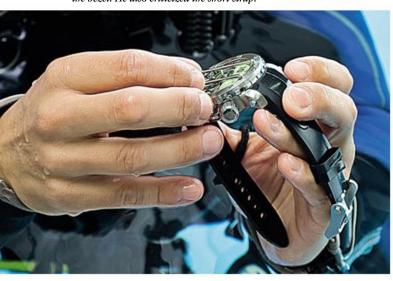
Diver Dirk Sonntag found it difficult to position the bezel. He also criticized the short strap.

The movement, an ETA/Valjoux 7750 whose chronograph mechanism has been removed, performs with acceptable rate values. The watch loses an average of only half a second per day, with the inaccuracy resulting from deviations in the "dial down" and "crown up" positions; it gains slightly in all the other positions.

The automatic caliber is unembellished but lives up to its reputation for reliability. It ticks behind a massive, bipartite, screwed back that helps keep the titanium case water-resistant to 300 meters. The handsome caseback portrays

the model's namesake sea creature and also specifies its water-resistance in meters. It's also engraved with the serial number and the number of the limited edition: our test watch was number 149 in a series of 500. The back is well made and so are the lugs, clasp and crown. The crown is topped by a protective cover, which the wearer must remove before operating the crown - a feature that works well and gives an impression of reliability and security. The out-of-the-ordinary styling of the cover conforms to the watch's bold, boastful design, but upon removing it, the wearer will note that the crown itself is rather small. Despite this, it is surprisingly easy to operate, for manually winding the mainspring, quickly resetting the date display and adjusting the positions of the hands. Only a little dexterity and a bit of pressure are needed to screw the cover securely back in place.

Equally high quality distinguishes the screwed connections on the rubber strap and clasp, as well as the strap itself. Unfortunately, the strap is much too small for the watch: it's thick, sturdy, and firmly attached to the lugs, but it's much too short to be securely fastened around the sleeve of a diving suit, as Sonntag noticed right away while suiting up for the diving pool. He lamented the absence of an ex-



### **Pros**

- + Rate performance
- + Bezel clicks neatly into place
- + Easy-to-use crown
- + High-quality strap and clasp

### Cons

- Day/night legibility
  No calibrations on
- No calibrations on bezel
- Too-short strap with no divers' extension



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### **SPECS**

### **BURAN STINGRAY**

**Manufacturer:** Buran SA, Chemin du Val 2, 2900 Porrentruy, Switzerland

Reference number: B50-104-7-522

**Functions:** Hours, minutes, small seconds, divers' bezel, date display

Movement: ETA/Valjoux 7750, automatic; diameter = 30 mm; height = 7.9 mm; 25 jewels; 28,800 vph; 49-hour power reserve; nickel balance; flat Nivarox hairspring; Incabloc shock absorber; fine adjustment via index

**Case:** Titanium with sapphire crystal, water-resistant to 300 meters

**Strap and clasp:** Rubber with pronged buckle

**Dimensions:** Diameter = 52.3 mm, height = 20.2 mm, weight = 197 grams

Price: \$4,799



The Stingray's divers' bezel has no minute markings, and can only be grasped by the raised triangle. Two stirrups obstruct the view of the dial.

tension piece, which he had rightly expected to find on a divers' watch that costs \$4,799. He would even have settled for an intervening piece with a second pronged buckle, a strap-lengthening solution that's very popular among divers and widely used by them.

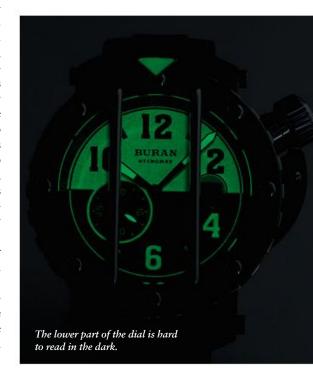
After some effort, Sonntag finally fastened the Stingray to his wrist, albeit under the sleeve of his suit, and reported that it fit quite well but that it was somewhat too large for his taste. He usually likes to keep his watch's dial in view when diving, but he couldn't do this with the Stingray.

Sonntag had trouble when he tried to set the rotating bezel, which can be grasped only at one point: namely, on its raised orientation triangle, which is pointy and sharp-edged. "If your hands are wet, and especially if you're wearing diving gloves, your fingers slide along the ridged periphery without taking hold," he said. His next setback came after he had finally gotten a grip on the triangle and attempted to bring the rotating bezel into position — only to lose its orientation. The unidirectional bezel clicks impeccably into place in one-minute increments, but is entirely without a calibrated

scale, and the eight hexagonal Allen bolts only add to the confusion. "This is a totally flawed design, if you ask me," Sonntag said, pointing out that a precise minute circle is indispensable on the bezel of a divers' watch. In the instructions that come with the watch, Buran suggests using the triangle to clock the duration of a dive, but Sonntag insisted that was not a viable method for doing so. Furthermore, he found it impossible to work professionally with the minute circle because its calibrations are marked on the steeply sloping flange around the dial, where they're either difficult or impossible to read even in daylight. In the dark, it's worse, because the calibrations have no luminous coating. In Sonntag's opinion, staying oriented to the nearest minute is crucial for a diver, and a watch that doesn't enable him to do so is inexcusably flawed.

When a diver wears a Stingray under water, he can encounter situations in which the watch is no longer easy to read. The entire lower portion of the dial is difficult or impossible to make out in the dark. It not only has no to-the-minute orientation; it also fails to offer even vague segments of five, 10 or 15 minutes.

Last but not least, the two metal stirrups over the dial significantly obstruct the view without serving an actual function;, why they are there is anybody's guess.





### **SPECS**

## OMEGA SEAMASTER PLOPROF

**Manufacturer:** Omega SA, Rue Stämpfli 96, 2504 Bienne, Switzerland

Reference number: 224.30.55.21.01.001

**Functions:** Hours, minutes, central seconds, divers' bezel, date display, helium-release valve

Movement: Omega 8500, automatic; diameter = 29 mm; height = 5.5 mm; 39 jewels; 25,200 vph; Omega balance; Nivarox hairspring; Nivachoc shock absorber; fine adjustment via two Torx screws; beveled edges; skeletonized rotor; polished white-gold screws; decorated with circular graining and Geneva waves in Arabesque pattern; certified chronometer

**Case:** Stainless steel with nonreflective sapphire crystal, water-resistant to 1,200 meters

**Bracelet and clasp:** Stainless-steel Milanese bracelet with pressure-activated folding clasp and divers' extension piece

**Dimensions:** Diameter = 55.3 mm x 47.9 mm, height = 17.5 mm, weight = 280 grams

Price: \$9,700

## **Pros**

- + Chronometer-certified manufacture movement
- + User-friendly divers' bezel
- + Good legibility
- + High-quality, comfortable bracelet with divers' extension

## Cons

 Extension piece is hard to pull out



## **OMEGA SEAMASTER PLOPROF**

This legendary watch's nickname is an abbreviation for *plongeurs professionnels*, French for "professional divers." It earned this moniker during tests conducted in France 40 years ago on the Omega Seamaster Professional 600. The new generation of the Ploprof arrived in 2009, bringing with it a case that Omega claims to be water-resistant to 1,200 meters, although in tests, the watch has endured water pressures twice as high as that. The Ploprof outperforms all other Omega divers' watches, not only in the category of water-resistance but in other aspects as well.

It was love at first sight for our test diver, although he promptly criticized the orange button on the right side of the case, used to lock the rotating divers' bezel, which, unlike the bezels of most divers' watches, moves in both directions. "A rotating bezel ought to be operable with one hand. That's not possible here,

and it's doubly impossible in the water," Sonntag said. But he soon changed his mind, finding that he could in fact press the locking button and turn the bezel with one hand. (The button is necessary to keep the bezel from inadvertently being knocked in a clockwise direction, which would cause the bezel to understate the amount of elapsed time.) While he prefers a traditional unidirectional bezel, Sonntag was enthusiastic about the Ploprof's bezel after coming up from his dive. "It's a dream come true," he said. "It's what I imagined, with thoroughgoing glow-in-the-dark calibration and ideal legibility." The watch's legibility is further enhanced by the nonreflective sapphire crystal, which is 4.9 mm thick.

The crystal is nonreflective and ensures an unhindered view of this watch's clean dial. The orange minute hand is the most salient detail here, which it should be, since the minute hand is the most important hand on every divers' watch. Its

bright color sets it instantly apart from all the other indicators relevant to diving, such as the orientation point on the bezel and the bezel's blocking button. The button, incidentally, is a massive steel pin with a collar of anodized aluminum.

Tipping the scales at 280 grams, the watch has a massive, solidly constructed case. Unlike the original Ploprof case, this one is not a monocoque, but has a screwed caseback affixed with an additional ring so that the engraved seahorse emblem on it is always correctly positioned. Below the blocking button at the right, there is another button on the protruding flank of the case. Labeled with the chemical abbreviation "He," it's Omega's first fully automatic helium valve. It is really more a gimmick than a genuinely valuable feature, since it is used only when a diver is in a diving chamber, something few divers ever experience. The large protrusion on the left side of the case is for the crown protector, which is operated by screwing the outer part outward or inward along with the crown. Sonntag says this feature offered "absolutely certain protection" for the crown.

Omega's automatic Caliber 8500, which powers the watch, has no quickadjustment mechanism for the date dis-



A completely luminous rotating bezel is a rare and welcome sight.

play, so if you want to reset the date, you need to pull the crown out to its middle position, the same one used to set the

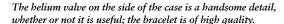
Other highlights of this manufacture movement include a co-axial escapement, two barrels that amass a 60-hour power reserve and COSC chronometer certification. It proved its prowess on our timing machine, where it ran with an average



With a bit of manual dexterity, only one hand is needed to press the blocking button and set the rotating bezel.

daily gain of 2.4 seconds and a deviation among the various positions of just 1.8 seconds. (The previous Omega Ploprof we tested, without the input of a diver, had an average gain of 1.5 seconds and a maximum deviation of three seconds; see the WatchTime August 2010 issue.) Those values are just about as good as they get. And our rigorous practical test proved that the co-axial movement has what it takes to cope with rough daily use by a professional diver.

For his dive, Sonntag adjusted the clasp, extracting the built-in extension piece that allows the wearer to adjust the bracelet's length, to a maximum 25 extra millimeters, at the push of a button. That's wasn't quite enough extra length to slip the watch over the sleeve of his diving suit, so he had to use the other fold-out extension piece, which takes a bit of pulling to extract. Once deployed, it provides an additional 27 or 28 millimeters, making the bracelet long enough to fit over nearly any diving suit. The huge, pressure-activated folding clasp is both a technical triumph and a design coup, with matte surfaces, polished edges and a seahorse engraving. Removable components on both sides of the clasp enable the attractive Milanese bracelet to be adjusted to any desired length.





### PORSCHE DESIGN P'6780 DIVER

If the P'6780 Diver's pivoting case looks familiar, there is a reason: it made its debut in 2005 on the Kon-Tiki divers' watch from Eterna, the Swiss watch manufacturer that is licensed to produce and distribute Porsche Design watches. The P'6780 Diver came out in 2010 and, like the Kon-Tiki, it has a case water-resistant to an impressive 1,000 meters.

Sonntag was a bit skeptical about this watch at first, dismissing the peculiar case as a "plaything." Eventually, however, he was won over, praising its interesting construc-

tion. The steel case can be pivoted out of a titanium bridge with the help of two pressure-sensitive buttons. The pale, matte case and the anthracite-colored, bead-blast-

ed bridge comprise the two main elements of the watch's innovative design. It was Sonntag's learning that the pivoting mechanism, which moves the case up and down, aided in the watch's security that convinced him of its usefulness.

The divers' bezel is a flange around the periphery of the dial and beneath the sapphire crystal, which is slightly curved and is nonreflective on both its surfaces. Only when the case is pivoted out of the bridge can the bezel be rotated and reset. This is done with the aid of the outer part of the bezel, and is easy even under water and with diving gloves. Clous de Paris decorations along the rim of the bezel make it easier to get a good grip. The same pattern appears on the crown and on the push-buttons used to make the case pivot.

The bezel rotates in only one direction and clicks authoritatively into place in single-minute increments. At the 6 o'clock position on the edge of the case, a pair of pins mesh visibly with teeth on the lower part of the bezel, thus preventing it from turning in the opposite direction. The pins penetrate the entire addition to



All the important elements are easy to read in the dark: the hour and minute hands, the indices and the calibrations on the rotating bezel.



## **SPECS**

## PORSCHE DESIGN P'6780 DIVER

**Manufacturer:** Eterna AG, Schützengasse 46, 2540 Grenchen, Switzerland

**Reference number:** 6780.44.53.1218 **Functions:** Hours, minutes, seconds,

divers' bezel, date display

Movement: ETA 2892-A2, automatic; diameter = 25.6 mm; height = 3.6 mm; 21 jewels; 28,800 vph; Glucydur balance; flat Nivarox hairspring; Incabloc shock absorber; Etachron fine adjustment; blued screws; Porsche Design rotor; decorated with circular graining

**Case:** Stainless steel and titanium with curved, nonreflective sapphire crystal; water-resistant to 1,000 meters

**Strap and clasp:** Rubber strap, integrated into case, with pressure-activated folding clasp and divers' extension

**Dimensions:** Diameter = 46.9 mm, height = 17.2 mm, weight = 191.5 grams

Price: \$10,250

the case, which also holds the hinge that enables the case to pivot. When the case is swung closed, the titanium bridge locks the pins so the bezel cannot be accidentally repositioned. The crown at 12 o'clock is also inoperable when the case is inside its bridge. The crown vanishes halfway

into the titanium bridge in this closed position, but it does so only if it has already been pressed all the way into the case — a useful, additional safety measure.

The clever system used in the P'6780 Diver prevents water from entering the case to a depth of 1,000 meters, and it does so without the need for a screwed crown. The other divers'-watch feature that has been intentionally left out is a helium-release valve, which Porsche Design regards as an unnecessary addition, since it is only needed when a diver descends in a diving bell.

bility. A boldly dominant hand indicates the passing minutes, which are crucial for a diver. All 60 minute markings are indicated on both the dial and the divers' bezel. Although the minute circle is luminous only at five-minute increments after the "15," Sonntag was still very satisfied with the legibility of the diving function in particular and the time in general. The watch's movement, ETA Caliber 2892-A2, keeps time with exemplary accuracy, gaining only 2.7 seconds per day on our

tested model, although the rate differ-

ences ranged between +6.1 seconds in the "6 o'clock up" position and -2.8 seconds

in the "9 o'clock up" position.

Our diver praised the dial and its legi-

While preparing to dive with the watch, Sonntag once again paused to note another feature of the case — the built-in, moveable lugs, which make the watch very comfortable on the wrist. The lugs are fastened to the titanium bridge the same way they are to the rubber parts of the strap. On the other ends, the parts of the clasp are screwed.

Sonntag noted that this strap, too, was a bit too short to fit easily over the sleeve of his diving suit, but was glad to find that the adjustable, pressure-sensitive, folding clasp comes with a convenient extension so a diver can easily lengthen it to fit. Although it closes only on one side, the watch was secure enough to satisfy Sonntag as both diver and timepiece descended into the diving pool.



Despite his early reservations about the unconventional case, Sonntag found that the watch's rotating bezel worked very well.



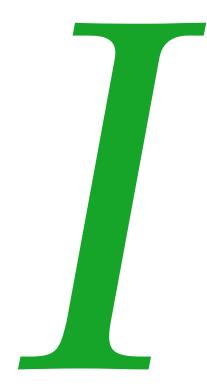
## Pros

- + Innovative case with security feature
- + Good rate behavior
- + Dial is very legible in the dark
- + Moveable lugs for comfort on the wrist

## Cons

- Strap is slightly short
- Minute circle is only luminous in fiveminute increments after 15-minute mark

# The King INTERVIEW BY ELMAR OF CTYSTAIL SCHALK AND NINA BAUER OF CTYSTAIL



Georg Riedel, the notoriously press-shy, 10th-generation scion of the Austrian glassmaking dynasty, speaks about his appreciation of fine watches.

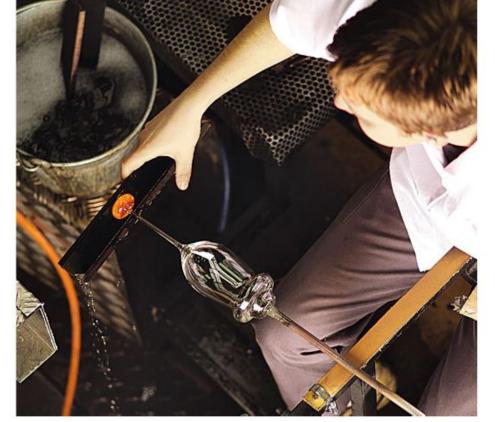
f you have fine crystal wine glasses in your cabinet, you're probably familiar with the name Riedel. The family-owned company first started making glass in 1756, and Georg Josef Riedel, born in Innsbruck, Austria in 1949, has been at its helm since 1973. Under his direction, the Riedel brand has become known for quality glassware, particularly among wine connoisseurs, who appreciate its wide selection of shaped glasses, each tailored for maximum enjoyment of a particular type of wine or spirit, from Bordeaux to Champagne to single malt Scotch. Under his leadership, Riedel has opened subsidiaries throughout the world — in the United States in 1979, Canada in 1992, Germany in 1996, Japan in 2000 and Great Britain in 2001. The company's purchase of the German glass factory Nachtmann/Spiegelau (now renamed Riedel-Nachtmann-Spiegelau) in 2004 has made it the largest manufacturer of high-quality glassware in all of Europe. Georg Riedel lives near Kufstein, Austria. His two children, Laetizia and Maximilian, are the 11th generation of Riedels to work for the family business. While glassmaking is in his blood, fine watches have also become a passion for the elder Riedel, and he is not shy about his preferences, prejudices and pet peeves in the world of timepieces.



## CONNOISSEURS Georg Riedel



Riedel Glassworks produces hand-blown and machine-made decanters and wine glasses.



As in watchmaking, glassmakers like Riedel experiment with new materials to increase scratch resistance.

## WT: Tell us about the watch you're wearing now.

**GR:** This is an important, classic watch from A. Lange & Söhne — the Lange 1 Time Zone in rose gold. I bought it for myself in 2006. It's one of the watches I most like to wear.

## WT: What helps you choose which watch to wear?

GR: Travel, for instance. That's when I prefer to wear a time-zone watch. I like to be able to see at a glance what time it is in different time zones. And because I travel so often, this type of watch makes the most sense. Stopwatch functions are less important to me. I have a great respect for the craftsmanship and work they require, but I don't need that particular function. The second-time-zone complication, on the other hand, is something that I truly appreciate. In my opinion, there are too few attractive watches that offer that function.

## WT: How do you select a watch you'd like to purchase?

**GR:** Aesthetics is the most important criterion. I like classic designs and established brand names that retain their value. I am a relatively conservative person when it comes to watches and when all the right conditions are present, I'm a rather uncomplicated customer.

## WT: Do you wear certain watches for special or emotional occasions?

GR: Mechanical watches always have an emotional component that sets them apart from quartz watches. Because I travel so much, I have to take special care to ensure that I don't take along a watch with complications I can't correct myself. The greatest agony for me would be if the perpetual calendar in my Audemars Piguet would stop, because it's so difficult to set it to the correct date. That's why watch winders are so important to me. This A.P., with its moon-phase display, is a classic from the 1980s.

## WT: Do you recall purchasing each of your watches?

GR: Yes. I bought my Audemars Piguet at Swiss Watch in London. They were having a watch sale when I discovered it, so I asked whether they might have it at a lower price. They said that it was indeed included in the sale, so I had a closer look at it. I was a relatively young man at the time and the watch was pretty expensive.

## WT: Did the price shock you?

**GR:** No, though it is true that you do have to ease your conscience whenever you pay a sum like that for a watch, and convince yourself that you really deserve it. But then again I don't part so very eas-



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ily with money. It took me 24 hours to decide to buy that Audemars Piguet.

## WT: Did you inherit any of the watches in your collection?

**GR:** There are a few things that are just as satisfying to pass down as they are to inherit. Pieces like that won't be set aside they are always taken out and worn on certain special occasions. My father-inlaw left me this Patek Philippe and I think about him every time I wear it. The watch is from the early 1970s and I just had it serviced by the company. The first thing Patek wanted to do was replace the dial, but my immediate reaction was "absolutely not!" I find it particularly appealing as the predecessor of the Nautilus. Unfortunately, the buckle had to be replaced the last time I got a new strap, so it isn't the original one. If this watch were still available at this level of elegance, I'd buy it in a minute.

## WT: You've shown us several vintage models. What are some of the newer watches that you own?

GR: My son just bought two models from Audemars Piguet's Royal Oak Offshore Safari collection — one in stainless steel and one in carbon fiber. I personally don't care for the Safari at all. And I have found that the newer Audemars Piguets no longer have the same quality they once had. I bought [a new model of] the same Royal Oak that I received on my 30th birthday, but the new bracelets are not as nicely finished as the original ones from the 1970s.

## WT: Do you have a particular preference for certain materials?

**GR:** No. It doesn't matter to me whether the watch is stainless steel, or white, rose or yellow gold. I usually wear a leather strap. But I also have a nice Rolex GMT-Master [with a bracelet] that I wear as a sport watch.

## WT: How did your love of watches come about?

**GR:** I can only guess that anyone with a weakness for aesthetics will also have an eye for beautiful watches. My first nice watch was an Omega Speedmaster



Riedel travels the world and appreciates a second-time zone wristwatch. This is his Lange 1 Time Zone in rose gold.



Riedel bought this Audemars Piguet perpetual calendar in London 30 years ago.

Professional, a special edition that came on the market to commemorate the moon landing in 1969. I gave that watch away because, at the time, I believed that a young man really only needed one watch. I hadn't yet come to the realization that it's possible to collect watches.

## WT: Have you ever bought any watches solely as investments?

GR: I was never concerned with the commercial buying and selling of anything except glass. Even when I buy wine it's only for the enjoyment of it — not as an investment. Besides, the idea of watches gaining in value has always been rather doubtful. I believe that there are only a very few watches that keep or increase their value. Usually even the "classic" watches experience a loss in value of up to 80 percent.

## WT: Do you judge a person based on his or her watch?

GR: That's a very good question. It's one of those things I do notice. The famous wine producer Piero Antinori, for example, wears a Swatch. But I don't judge a person based on the value of the watch they wear. A beautiful watch is always an expression of the complicated personality of a person. Or, to say it another way: a wristwatch can provide a glimpse behind the curtain. It opens a little window into the person's personality.

## WT: Did you ever regret a purchase?

**GR:** Not yet, thank goodness. I would gladly buy any of my watches again because I see them as being part of me.

## WT: Would you ever buy vintage models? GR: No. Simply because the watch movements [in them] are not as accurate as those in the current models. Likewise, I won't buy another watch that does not have a mechanical movement.

WT: Do you own any quartz watches?

GR: In the 1980s I bought a quartz watch from Gérald Genta, which I still have. But when the battery runs down I have to go to the watchmaker and sometimes the inside of the watch case is dirty, and it can



SR-71 Blackbird<sup>TM</sup> Limited Edition Valjoux Chronograph Series No. 9082.BO: 44mm, black PVD plated stainless steel case with screw case back and screw-down crown, internal rotating timing ring, antireflective sapphire crystals top and bottom, water resistant to 100 meters, with black PVD plated solid ink stainless steel bracelet, and Luminox self-powered illumination. Swiss Made. Preferred timepiece of U.S. Air Force Pilots. Luminox.com



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all end up turning into a huge drama because we often need to send the watch away to have the battery replaced. On the other hand, the accuracy of the watch is simply perfect. None of my other watches is as accurate. That's the only quartz watch I own.

## WT: Could you imagine designing your own watch?

GR: Just as with our glasses, this is no simple matter. So many different watches have been created over the centuries. But something that greatly impressed me recently was a new design introduced by one of the leading watch manufacturers in which it was only possible to read the time from the numerals and not the hands. Extremely interesting, even though a hand is the ideal way to show the time at a glance.

## WT: What faults on a watch do you find unacceptable?

**GR:** In my opinion it shouldn't be possible to measure the tolerance of a watch. It is tiresome to have to adjust a watch. It makes me livid. I set my watches precisely and so I would like to be sure that every watch I have runs properly.

## WT: A glance at your cell phone will give you the precise time.

**GR:** But then I don't need to wear a watch on my wrist. I don't use a cell phone as a timepiece; I use it to make phone calls. That, by the way, is a major

challenge for the watch industry — so many young people these days don't even wear a watch and just use their cell phones to tell time.

## WT: You have said that Riedel glasses function as "loudspeakers" for wine. In your opinion, what is the function of a wristwatch?

GR: The primary function is displaying the time. Beyond that, it is all about the emotional story behind each one, and the pleasure one gets in wearing such a watch. And it is most certainly a status symbol. People know how much a watch like this costs. Part of wearing a watch like this is to indicate what you've accomplished and what you're still capable of. There was once a clever watch advertisement that went something like, "You can't take your Ferrari into a bar."

## WT: So do you always wear a watch?

GR: Yes, even though wearing a watch like this isn't always advisable. One can quite easily become a target that way, especially in places like Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo. Then it's better not to take them along.

## WT: Have you ever had a watch made especially for you?

GR: Yes, by Gérald Genta in Monte Carlo. We were already personally acquainted and were permitted to select the watch components ourselves. Naturally, these were standard components



Riedel inherited this 1970s Patek Philippe from his father-in-law.

Riedel wine glasses, like these from the Vinum collection, are shaped to maximize the flavors and aromas of specific wines.



but it was still very exciting to be able to assemble a watch according to my own taste. I decided on a perpetual calendar with a gold case and mother-ofpearl dial.

## WT: Watchmaking has always experimented with new materials.

GR: There are certainly great opportunities for innovation in watchmaking. The case alone, for example, can be made of any number of materials. Recently even Kevlar has been used for watches to make them extremely light and sturdy. Unfortunately Kevlar also has the tendency to wear and have a dull appearance. If you like it — well, that's fine. For me, metal has a timeless quality.

## WT: Are new materials being introduced into glassmaking, too?

GR: Certainly. There are always experiments being done to increase the longevity of glass — that is, to make it more dishwasher-safe and more resistant to scratches and breakage. Huge progress has been made over the last 20 to 25 years and we are right at the forefront.

## WT: How often do you introduce new glass collections?

**GR:** Whenever we feel the time is right and we can bring something new to the market that might not yet exist. In this case, market research is essential.

## WT: How long does it take to develop a new glass collection?

GR: It always begins with a spontaneous idea. The "O" series developed by my son Max was truly a spontaneous idea, and we simply put the idea into action. The preparation time needed for a mouth-blown glass series is relatively short, but gift items require much more time since it's necessary to determine where to set the seams. The design requirements for machinemade glassware are, therefore, considerably higher. Glass has extremely narrow physical limits; nevertheless, one can still be very creative within those limits, as you can see from our products.

WT: Which Riedel glass collections have been around the longest?

Though he admires the accuracy of quartz, Riedel buys only mechanical watches.

GR: [We introduced] the Sommelier collection [in] 1973, but there are some glasses within it that originated in 1958. Before that time there wasn't yet the idea of "form follows function" for glasses. My father, Claus Riedel, was the first glass designer who developed a functional glass. Before him there were very valuable and beautiful glasses that had the sole function of holding a liquid. No one was concerned with directing the liquid and transmitting the message within a bottle of wine. I would name Claus Riedel as one of the most influential designers of the 20th century in view of the development of this groundbreaking glass design that has become the worldwide standard.

## WT: What are the differences between the mouth-blown glasses Riedel produces and its machine-made glasses?

GR: First of all, the primary difference is an emotional one. Every mouth-blown glass has held the breath of a human being. Machine-made glass, in contrast, represents development and technology. From a functional point of view both glasses perform the same task. Both are thin, but there are differences in the feel and the weight of each. Compared with a handmade glass, a machine-made glass will be significantly heavier. With handmade glassware there is always that fine balance between lightness and longevity.

## WT: Is it still worthwhile to make hand-made glass?

GR: That's the wrong question. The right one is, "Is it still possible to sell mouth-blown glasses?" But to answer your question: it's certainly worthwhile as long as the market will pay the price that the production method requires.

WT: Many exporting countries view China as a modern-day El Dorado. Riedel has also established a company there. Are the Chinese potential wine drinkers with a sense of glassware aesthetics?

GR: If China continues to develop as it



has over the last 20 years, it will most certainly become a very exciting market. Still, I hesitate to put people into categories. Everyone has an affinity for eating and drinking, and both are necessary for our survival. Good wine and good food are luxuries that the Chinese can also appreciate. An advantage of globalization is that we can introduce them to wine drinking. But of course that will take a certain amount of time since it's not a part of their culture. Traditionally speaking, there hasn't been any kind of grape growing in China, even though there are many regions in that vast country that meet all the climatic and geological needs for producing very good wine.

## WT: Is that a hint that you'll be entering the winemaking business?

**GR:** Winemaking is a highly stressful profession. Being a glassmaker and a winemaker at the same time — well, that might be a bit too much.





isitors to Geneva are instantly drawn to the city's gorgeous waterfront, where they can stand at the point where Lake Geneva merges with the Rhône River, and look across the water into the heart of the city. The view is especially beautiful at night, when the reflections of the centuries-old buildings ripple trippingly on the water's surface.

One feature of Geneva's nighttime skyline is sure to catch a watch fancier's eye. It's not the elegant building facades or famous jet d'eau (French for "water spout"): everyone, watch lover or not, admires those. Rather, it's the string of neon watchbrand names that runs like a colorful necklace along the tops of the buildings. Rolex, Patek Philippe, Vacheron Constantin, Baume et Mercier, Raymond Weil, Bedat, de Grisogono, Piaget, Chopard, all Geneva-based brands, shine brightly above the shimmering Rhône.

The necklace is a fitting embellishment to the cityscape, because Geneva, as every watch aficionado knows, is the grande dame of high horology. Centuries ago, it was famous for its exquisitely engraved or enameled pendant and pocketwatches; today for its CAD-CAM-designed, CNC-machined wristwatches. Both represent the higher reaches of the Swiss watch industry.

**WATCHMAKING CAME** to Geneva in the mid-1500s — just a few decades after the watch itself was invented — and grew dramatically in the 17th and 18th centuries. Ironically, given the lavish horological concoctions for which the city would become known, it took root there because of that most astringent of religious movements, the Protestant Reformation.

Almost as soon as the Reformation began, Geneva, then an independent republic, attracted Protestants fleeing persecution in France. Many of these Protestants were watchmakers. The French Protestant theologian John Calvin settled there in 1541, preaching his doctrine of predestination and promoting strict asceticism. (He delivered his sermons from the pulpit of St. Peter's Cathedral, in Geneva's Old Town, on what is called the Left Bank, south of the Rhône. It, along with a monument built to honor Calvin and other Protestant leaders, called the Reformation Wall, are two of the city's most famous landmarks.) Calvinism, which frowned on most luxuries, smiled on watchmakers because they produced utilitarian objects that helped people make better use of their time.

As French Protestant refugees, known as Huguenots, migrated to Geneva, the city took on its nickname, "the Protestant Rome." The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572, in which French Catholics killed thousands of Protestants, brought a



Reformation Wall. John Calvin is second from the left.

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flood of refugees to Geneva. Another flood poured in more than a century later, starting in 1685, when France's Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, which had protected Protestants from the most egregious forms of persecution. Some 200,000 Protestants left France. The exodus "devastated" the French watch industry, writes the historian David Landes in his book *Revolution in Time*.

France's loss was Geneva's gain. By the late 17th century, Geneva had about 100 master watchmakers employing about 300 workers. (Geneva's first watchmaking guild had been established in 1601.) By the 1740s, there were about 550 master watchmakers in the city.

Geneva's oldest watch company, Vacheron Constantin, dates back to that era. In 1755, Jean-Marc Vacheron opened a watchmaking atelier in the neighborhood known as St. Gervais, on the Right Bank (northern bank) of the Rhône. The company has been making watches continuously since then. Its headquarters are now in the Plan-les-Ouates suburb on the outskirts of Geneva. But it still owns its old headquarters building on the Quai de L'Île on an island in the Rhône, which now houses the Vacheron Constantin museum. Right next to it is the Tour de L'Île ("island tower") — a famous Geneva landmark and one-time prison — that gave its name to an extremely complicated Vacheron watch launched in 2005.

**THE VAST MAJORITY** of the city's watchmakers worked, like Jean-Marc Vacheron, in St. Gervais. This was the site of what came to be called La Fabrique, or the Factory. The name re-

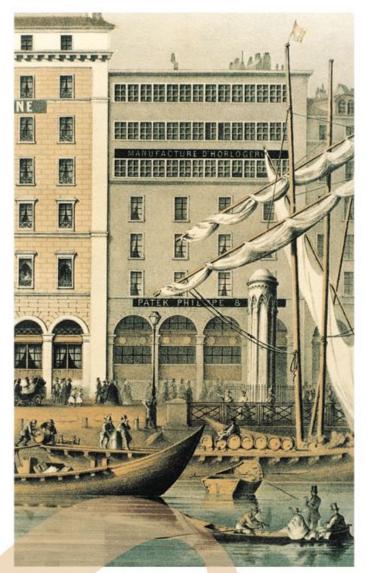
The watchmaking Fabrique was in St. Gervais (the wedge-shaped cluster of buildings to the right of the square of buildings and bordering the river).

Geneva's watchmakers farmed out work to Carouge (below), now a suburb of Geneva.





## THE WATCHMAKERS OF THE FABRIQUE WERE NO ORDINARY WORKING STIFFS. THEY WERE WELL EDUCATED AND UNUSUALLY WELL PAID.



Patek Philippe's headquarters in the mid-19th century



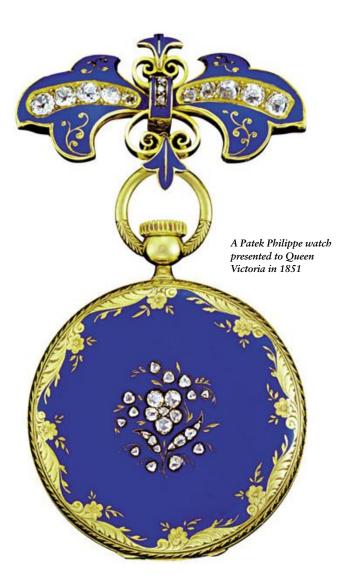
One of the first watches made by Jean-Marc Vacheron

ferred not to a single enterprise but to the amalgam of hundreds of small watchmaking and jewelry-making ateliers located there, often on the top floors, which got the most sunlight. Today, St. Gervais is a nondescript section of town containing residences and commercial buildings. In the 18th and 19th centuries, though, it was a bustling beehive of activity, as watchmaking rose to become the city's chief industry and the backbone of its economy. Production there peaked in the years 1781 to 1786, when the Fabrique was turning out about 85,000 watches per year, Landes writes. In its heyday it employed about 40 percent of Geneva's working population.

The watchmakers of the Fabrique were no ordinary working stiffs. They were well educated and unusually well paid, earning about twice what other artisans did. Landes describes them as the aristocrats of the artisan class, wearing silk stockings and powdered wigs. The Geneva-born *philosophe* Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote of a boyhood spent reading Tacitus and Plutarch into the wee hours of the morning with his watchmaker father, Isaac. Displaying both chauvinism for Geneva and contempt for its watchmaking rival, France, he wrote, "You can introduce a Geneva watchmaker anywhere, but a Parisian watchmaker can talk about nothing but watches."

Isaac Rousseau and his fellow watchmaker-intellectuals in the Fabrique represented the upper tier of the watch-industry hierarchy. As early as the 17th century, the Geneva industry had begun to adopt the system of *établissage*, in which various production processes were handled by different independent suppliers. By the 18th century, rough, low-skill work was being farmed out to inexpensive labor in places such as Carouge, now a suburb of Geneva; and Gex, a French province that borders Geneva. Isaac Rousseau and his ilk devoted themselves to the high-skilled jobs of assembly and adjustment. Occupying small ateliers, and employing just two or three people (or sometimes just one), these craftsmen were called *cabinotiers* (*cabinot* being a reference to the workshops' small size).

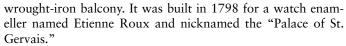
You can get a sense of how the wealthy and highly skilled artisans of St. Gervais lived from the building at 25 Rue de Chantepoulet, with its rich-looking classical facade and



The Vacheron Constantin factory in the early 19th century







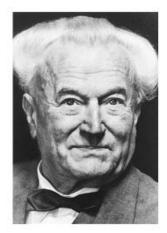
The Fabrique owed its stunning success to another phenomenon as well: the emergence of what might be called the watch merchant-adventurer. These were businessmen who allied themselves with watchmakers, whose goods they sold all over the world. The most famous such partnership was that of the businessman Antoine Norbert de Patek and Jean Adrien Philippe, founders, in 1845, of Patek & Co. (renamed Patek Philippe and Co. six years later). Patek's travels abroad included a hair-raising voyage to the United States in 1854-55, in which his hotel room was burglarized and his river boat ran aground for days. François Constantin, the businessman in the Vacheron Constantin alliance, was another such intrepid traveler.

There was almost nowhere these salesmen didn't go — the Mideast, China, South America — and it was their enterprise that made Geneva a watch-world power.



One important Right Bank building, west of St. Gervais, deserves mention. It is a chateau called Les Délices, and it's where the great French *philosophe* Voltaire lived from 1755 to 1765. Voltaire's connection to the Geneva watch industry was intimate, albeit not well known today. In 1770, he founded a watchmaking colony in the French town of Ferney, a few miles from Geneva, in Gex, where hundreds of Geneva watchmakers went to work when political strife drove them out of the Fabrique. (See "Voltaire, Watch Baron" in the October 2011 issue of *WatchTime*.) Before he left for Ferney, he lived in Les Délices, now a museum dedicated to his work.

In the early 19th century, as mass-production techniques came to dominate the watch industry in the Swiss Jura moun-



Rolex founder Hans Wilsdorf



A Rolex facility (above) and Vacheron Constantin headquarters (below), both in Plan-les-Ouates



tain region to the north, and prices of Jura-made watches declined, some Geneva watch companies specialized in ever higher-priced, more exotic watches, covered with enameled illustrations, or encrusted with pearls and jewels. Some were automaton watches, featuring moving figures; others musical watches; still others so-called "form" watches shaped like flowers, hearts or animals.

A VISITOR TO GENEVA can see these, and many more made by Geneva companies, at the Patek Philippe museum in the Plainpalais area south of the Rhône. Just a decade old, it is one of the best watch museums in the world. (Geneva's other major watch museum, the Museum of Watchmaking and Enameling, is now closed. Its collections have been dispersed to other museums.)

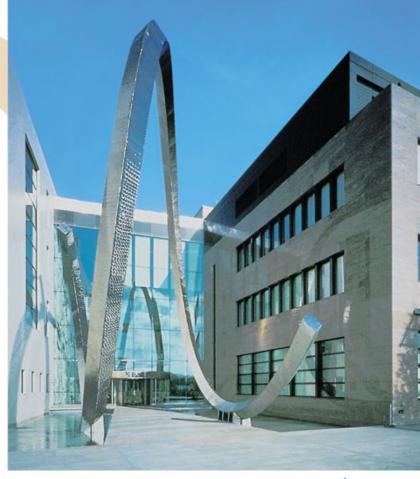
The vast collection is the work of the Stern family, owners of Patek Philippe, who for decades have been buying watches, including the rarest and most valuable Patek Philippes, for the museum. It has cost them a pretty penny. Patek Philippe has always been the unchallenged leader in the antique- and vintagewatch market, fetching prices higher than any other brand. Many of its auction records have been set here in Geneva, where the three major watch-auction houses — Christie's, Sotheby's and Antiquorum — all have offices.

Like Vacheron, Patek was once headquartered on the banks of the Rhône. Its former headquarters building, on the Rue du Rhône, now houses a Patek Philippe store.

Now, also like Vacheron, Patek Philippe has its headquarters and a factory in Plan-les-Ouates. The industrial section of the town has become a magnet for watch companies, which seem to compete to have the most modern, visually striking buildings. Vacheron's building is shaped like half of a Maltese cross, the company's symbol. Patek's has a giant outdoor sculpture representing a balance spring. Piaget is also located there, as is Harry Winston's watch operation, as well as the Frédérique Constant and Alpina brands (both are owned by the same company).

The biggest, best-known brand in Plan-les-Ouates is Rolex, whose 26,000-square-meter facility, about the size of five football fields, is jet black and as formidable as is Rolex itself to any brand that competes with it.

Rolex has been in Geneva ever since its founder, Hans Wilsdorf, opened an office there in 1919. From then on, Rolex divided its operations so that its movements were made in Bienne, Switzerland, and its cases in Geneva, where, in the early 20th century at least, Rolex case designers could keep a closer eye on fashions than they could in frumpier Bienne. The Plan-les-



Patek Philippe's headquarters in Plan-les-Ouates



Patek Philippe's honorary president Philippe Stern

IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY, AS MASS
PRODUCTION CAUGHT ON IN THE JURA
REGION, GENEVA CAME TO SPECIALIZE IN
EVER-HIGHER-PRICED WATCHES.

Urwerk's Mexican Fireleg version of its 103 model



Frédérique Constant's New Vintage Racing Chronograph

Ouates facility houses case and bracelet making, including gold alloying, which Rolex does itself.

The company's corporate headquarters are elsewhere in Geneva: inside the city limits in an area called Acacias. The complex of buildings there, all covered with glass tinted Rolex's corporate green, contain the top executives' offices and the company's watch-assembly and quality-control operations.

Wilsdorf lived in Geneva until his death in 1960 at his summer residence, a lakeside villa called L'Escale Fleurie. (His chief residence was on the Left Bank, at 18 Rue du Marché.) His name lives on in Geneva. The Hans Wilsdorf Foundation, which Wilsdorf established in 1945, and which owns the Rolex watch company, is headquartered in Carouge. Next year, the Hans Wilsdorf bridge, also in Carouge, and built by the foundation, will be completed. It spans the Arve river, which twists and turns its way through southern Geneva. (Incidentally, it was Wilsdorf's wife who named what is now one of Geneva's best-known restaurants, La Perle du Lac. Her husband and she purchased the group of buildings to which the restaurant belongs, and when she saw them, she exclaimed that the buildings were "the pearl of the lake.")





A Rolex Submariner

Svend Andersen at work in his Geneva atelier

Since the mechanical-watch renaissance began in the 1980s, several extremely small, very-high-end watch companies have been founded in Geneva, a foil to the larger manufacturers in Plan-les-Ouates. F.P. Journe, best known for a watch with two balances; Svend Andersen, famous for its erotic watches; Urwerk, known for its avant-garde designs in which rotating satellites act as watch hands; Romain Jerome, which makes watches commemorating historical events such as the sinking of the Titanic and the eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull; and MB&F, which turns out unorthodox so-called "horological machines," are all based in Geneva.

These brands, like scores before them, embrace the definition that French novelist Gustave Flaubert in 1880 put forth in his satirical Dictionnaire des Idées Reçues (Dictionary of Received Ideas): "Watch: Only any good if made in Geneva."









The Great Recession walloped Baume & Mercier. Here's how the Richemont Group plans to revive its most affordable brand.

BY JOE THOMPSON





n September 2009, when Alain Zimmermann arrived in Geneva to lead the restructuring of Baume & Mercier, he and his team hoped against hope that they would be able to generate some good buzz for the beleaguered brand.

And, indeed, they did. Consumers will offer their verdict on the new Baume & Mercier watches during the peak buying season now underway. But in May, Baume & Mercier got what amounted to a standing O in a most unlikely place: the executive wing of the giant Richemont Group, B&M's parent company.

In a May 19 meeting with financial analysts to discuss the results of the 2011 fiscal year, ended March 31, Richemont's top brass were uniformly bullish on Baume (pronounced "Bome"; rhymes with "Rome"). "I'm personally very excited about what I see," said Richemont executive chairman and CEO Johann Rupert. "The products we saw last Friday are going to hit the sweet spot."

Deputy CEO Richard Lepeu praised "the excellent management of the transition year at B&M, where the re-launch sounds promising."

Richemont's self-described "bean counter," chief financial officer Gary Saage, remarked, "I think the B&M management team, led by Alain Zimmermann, did a great job.... We're pretty positive about it. I think it's going to be a quick turnaround."

Not bad for a brand that racked up what Richemont describes as a "significant loss" in the 2010 fiscal year, followed by another "significant loss, a notch below last year" in fiscal 2011. (Richemont does not disclose financial results by brand.)



Baume & Mercier CEO Alain Zimmermann

Perhaps the most surprising thing about the session was the revelation of Johann Rupert's deep involvement with his most embattled watch brand. Rupert disclosed that he had authorized a massive, costly buyback of unsellable Baume & Mercier watches from its retailers. "I made the call," he said. "I said, 'Take the stuff back and destroy it.'"

Moreover, it was Rupert who provided the brand with its new slogan, "Life Is About Moments." The expression is a favorite of Rupert's South African chum, the vintner and former Springbok rugby player Schalk Burger, Sr., whom rugby fans will know as the father of current Springbok star, Schalk Burger, Jr. (See sidebar.) Rupert passed it on to Zimmermann, who has plastered it on B&M advertising around the world.

"From the beginning, Johann has been very involved," Zimmermann told *WatchTime*. "He said, 'If we do it properly, I will be extremely supportive. I will do whatever possible to make this a true success.' He regularly asks, 'What's going on? Show me the things.'" Says Zim-

mermann, "It's a good feeling, a very good feeling."

THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE from Richemont's big boss is a shot in the arm for a brand sorely in need of one. Baume & Mercier was one of the Richemont Group's first brands, but it is often considered the runt of the litter. As the group's most "affordable" watch, it tends to be overshadowed by its more glamorous and expensive sister brands.

The problem goes back to 1964, when the Baume & Mercier firm was taken over by Piaget. "Very soon, people were describing Baume & Mercier as 'a poor man's Piaget," writes Lucien Trueb in his 2005 book *The World of Watches*. "Management in Geneva dislikes that phrase to this day, but there was some truth to it," Trueb says. If you could not afford a pricey Piaget, then a Baume & Mercier would do.

A La Joux-Perret movement powers the Capeland Flyback Chronograph.

That was the situation when Cartier acquired Piaget and Baume & Mercier in 1988, the first step in the creation of the Vendôme Group, later renamed the Richemont Group. As the Vendôme/ Richemont Group grew, acquiring upscale brands like Vacheron Constantin, Jaeger-LeCoultre and A. Lange & Söhne, Baume & Mercier's status as a middle-brow brand in an increasingly highbrow group stood out. Today it is the only one of the eight brands in Richemont's Specialist Watchmakers division that does



THE NEW
CAPELAND IS
BASED ON A
BAUME &
MERCIER
MONOPUSHER
CHRONOGRAPH WATCH
FROM 1948.



The steel-cased Capeland Flyback Chronograph (\$7,500)



The jumpinghour watch in the all-men's Classima collection

not make an in-house movement. Over the years, there was occasional speculation in watch circles that Richemont would sell Baume & Mercier because it didn't "fit" the group profile. But Richemont held onto the brand: after all, its estimated annual sales of 200,000 watches added 250 million Swiss francs to Richemont coffers.

The Great Recession of 2009, however, battered the *maison*, as Richemont calls its companies, and dramatically lowered those figures. The crisis exposed several serious weaknesses. The most severe were too many doors (that is, retailers that sold the brand) and too many "dogs," watch-trade lingo for poor-selling product. In 2009, the company had 3,400 doors around the world and more than 200 different models.

Another problem is the brand's geographical imbalance. It was strong in the weak markets (Europe and the United States) and weak in the strong ones (Asia, particularly China). Eighty percent of B&M sales are to Westerners, Richemont says. Still another problem was that it relied entirely on wholesale sales. Unlike its Richemont sisters, it had no boutiques. (It opened its first two, in Beijing and Dubai, in 2008.) Company-owned boutiques far outperformed dealer networks during the recession. The bottom line is that Baume & Mercier was ill equipped to weather the storm of 2009. It was the only longtime Richemont watch brand to



Richemont CFO Gary Saage predicts a "quick turnaround" for B&M.

## Governor

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lose money in 2009 and 2010 (Richemont's fiscal 2010 and 2011). (Group newcomer Roger Dubuis, acquired in 2008, also ran in the red for those years.)

As a result, Richemont brass decided to completely overhaul the brand. It wanted new management, new positioning, new product, new marketing, new distribution — new everything. "It was a conscious decision to reposition B&M," Rupert said. "It really was a turnaround situation."

TO LEAD THE BAUME rehabilitation, Rupert and Georges Kern, the CEO of IWC Schaffhausen, who now also oversees both Baume & Mercier and Roger Dubuis, tapped Zimmermann. Zimmermann is a Richemont veteran. He joined Cartier in 1995 and served two stints at IWC. From 2002 to 2006, he held positions in sales and marketing. He left in 2006 to become managing director for marketing and communication at Julius Bär Bank in Zurich. In May 2009, Kern brought Zimmermann back to IWC as chief marketing officer. A few months later, he was CEO of B&M, formulating a comeback strategy. He and his team moved quickly on many fronts.

They cut the brand's swollen distribution by more than 50 percent, closing nearly 2,000 doors. Today, Baume & Mercier has 1,600 doors globally, down from 3,400 two years ago. In the United States, Baume & Mercier president Rudi Chavez eliminated two-thirds of his retail network, reducing the number of doors from 589 to 214. This is in keeping with a Richemont policy mandating "fewer partners and more partnership."

They not only trimmed the retail network, they cleaned it up, buying back



"THERE IS SOMETHING WORSE
THAN BEING COPIED AND FAKED.
IT'S WHEN NOBODY WANTS TO
FAKE IT BECAUSE IT'S SO BAD."

## Johann Rupert on Baume & Mercier

In a May 19, 2011 meeting with financial analysts, Richemont executive chairman and CEO Johann Rupert made several references to his involvement with the restructuring of Baume & Mercier.

On the decision to take what Richemont described as a "huge charge" to buy back distressed Baume & Mercier merchandise from retailers in fiscal year 2011:

"I'm responsible for [the huge charge for] B&M.... I made the call. If we don't buy it back, it's going to land in the gray market. So I said, 'Take the stuff back and destroy it.' That had an impact... Because otherwise it's part of brand equity. If you go and you find watches that retailers can't sell on the gray market, because we produced the wrong stuff, it's not the retailer's fault or the consumer's fault. We produced the wrong stuff and then when it didn't sell, we did deals to get it into the trade....

"As much as it hurts me [to admit], there's something worse than being copied and faked: It's *not* being copied and *not* being faked. That means there's no market for it. So, it's a disaster when you walk in [a shop] and you see this product is faked, but there's something worse. It's when nobody wants to fake it because it's so bad. So we took a bunch of this old stock [and] we cleaned the market up. I said to Gary [Richemont CFO Gary Saage], 'We could have sold it on a website somewhere, I suppose.' In the end, you're basically not doing your consumers a service that actually are buying the product...."

On the origin of Baume & Mercier's new slogan, "Life Is About Moments":

"There was a friend of mine at home [in] South Africa, the big Schalk Burger. Always when we sit and we've taken some crayfish out and we drink a glass of wine, he says, "Folks, life is about moments.' That's the only contribution I made to the campaign. Life is about moments; it's hit the sweet spot. The [Baume & Mercier] products we saw last Friday are going to hit the sweet spot. How long it's going to take — three years — I don't know. I am happy that it's hit the sweet spot.... I'm personally very excited about what I see..."

-JT

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obsolete inventory to clear the way for new Baume & Mercier watches introduced this year. "We took back all of the product from the doors that we were going forward with and we destroyed it," Gary Saage said at the analysts' meeting. It was part of what he describes as "the huge charge for Baume & Mercier" in the second half of fiscal 2011. The good news, said Saage, is that "starting April 1, it's an extremely clean situation."

Replacing the old product are four new collections of classically styled watches that are contemporary interpretations of previous B&M hits. In all, the B&M line consists of around 70 models, a mere third of the number when Zimmermann arrived.

RICHEMONT'S TOP
BRASS WANTED A
COMPLETE OVERHAUL OF THE
BAUME & MERCIER
BRAND.

Hampton, originally launched in 1994, is a new collection of rectangular men's and ladies' watches with art-decostyled curved cases. The line is inspired by a Baume & Mercier watch from the 1940s. There are 16 pieces in the collection, eight men's and eight ladies'. There are two men's models in the regular collection, an automatic with small seconds at 6 o'clock powered by an ETA 2895 movement, and an automatic chronograph with an ETA 2894 movement. Prices range from \$3,450 to \$4,700. The women's watches are quartz-powered; some are adorned with diamonds (\$2,650 to \$9,680).

In addition, Baume is producing more upscale pieces it calls "emblematic" watches. In the Hampton collection, the



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In this issue of WatchTime Update we bring you time trivia and top stories, including a photo and video-rich visit to Vacheron Constantin, a profile of Ulysse Nardin's new CEO Patrik Hoffmann, and a look at the first two Inside Basel/Geneva 2011 events in Chicago and Miami with more than 30 images. We'll look inside WatchTime's new October issue. Our quizzes focus on an underthe dial tech check and the arcane Rolex and Patek Philippe digital reference language. Who Knew looks at a famous figure from history who almost became a watchmaker.

We hope you enjoy it!

### WatchTime's October Issue is Out Now!



WatchTime's October issue includes our test of Omega's new Planet Ocean, fitted with the brand's in-house chronograph movement. Does it sink or

We also examine Breitling's new Navitin in-house BR01 movement, and Sinn's EZM 7.

Zenith's El Primero New Vintage 1969 and Glashutte Original's Senator Sixtles. Which one comes out on top?

We profile Aurel Bacs, the top auctioneer at the world's biggest watch auction house, and we look at more than 20 classically simple watches. Plus much more!

Look for WatchTime at Barnes & Noble, Hudson News, and other fine

Worth Time - the #1 selling watch magazine in the United States, per Barnes It Noble sales figures.

### Trivia Time

daylight savings time. At 11:00 p.m. on April 30, 1916, they advanced their clocks by one hour, until the following October: Britain followed three weeks later, on May 21. The U.S. first tried daylight savings time in 1918, but dropped it after two years. Except for a federal mandate during World War II, DST was optional amon the states until the Uniform Time Act was adopted in 1966, after which state legislatures had to vote to opt out if they so chose.

Prior to 1995, the International Date Line split the country of Kiribati. The result was that the eastern part of Kiribati was a whole day and two hours behind the western part of the country where its capital is located. In 1995 Kiribati decided to move the International Date Line far to the east- which placed the entire country into the

A watch that ticks at 28,800 vph will tick over 1 billion times in four years. (8 ticks per second = 252,455,408 ticks per year).

Seth Thomas set up his clockmaking business in 1813 in Plymouth Hollow, Connecticut. The town name was changed to Thomaston in 1875 in his honor. The company made the famous clock at Grand Central Station in New York City.

Inside Basel/Geneva: Only Four Shows Left, Tickets Going Fast. Secure Your Place Now!



Only four shows remain on the IBG 2011 schedule, and one is already sold out. Tickets are still available for Philadelphia on 9/22, San Francisco on 10/4, and Los Angeles on 10/6. The New York City show on 9/27 is sold out, with waitinglist-only still available

Each show starts with an extended Watch Fair with as many as 32 brands displaying their latest creations. We have more than twice as many brands as last year - you simply cannot see this collection of Sign up for our Update newsletter and receive a

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"emblematic" men's pieces are an automatic chronograph (\$8,750) and a manual-wind with a case in rose gold (\$15,000).

Capeland, originally introduced in 1998, is a men's chronograph collection with a retro look featuring telemeter and tachymeter scales (\$4,350). The new collection is based on a Baume & Mercier monopusher chronograph from 1948. The new models have Valjoux 7753 movements. The "emblematic" Capeland is a flyback chronograph powered by a La Joux-Perret 8147-2 movement (\$7,500 in steel; \$19,500 in rose gold).

Classima is a collection of men's automatic watches with small complications (GMT, annual calendar/big date, power reserve, etc.) in cases with diameters of 39 or 42 mm. Prices range from \$1,600 to \$7,400.

Linea is an update of the collection of women's quartz dress watches first introduced in 1987 and distinguished by bezels with prominent numerals. The new models have cases with diameters of 27 mm or 32 mm (\$1,950 to \$9,950).

Baume & Mercier's new product strategy focuses on classic, elegant designs, Zimmermann says. "I'll tell you why. What we did is look back at what kind of watches have been successful for Baume & Mercier. Guess what: all were classic watches. Even the Capeland. The first generation of Capeland was the classic one. The first Riviera was classic, then it moved on to sport. We will not go sport."

The brand remains committed to its "affordable luxury" niche. The key price point will be between \$2,000 and \$4,500. The "emblematic pieces" will be more expensive. But Zimmermann expects 70 percent of sales to come from watches priced from \$2,000 to \$4,500.

Likewise, B&M is committed to its unique position in the group as a proud

THE NEW TEAM IS
EMPHASIZING A
LONG-NEGLECTED
SIDE OF BAUME &
MERCIER: ITS
HISTORY.

établisseur, an assembler of watches using movements from top suppliers. These include producers within Richemont (Jaeger-LeCoultre, for instance) as well as outsiders like ETA, La Joux-Perret, Dubois Dépraz, Soprod and others. "We are not a manufacture," Zimmermann says. "We are very clear, very honest. Nowhere do you see the word 'manufacture.' We don't try to give that impression. The business model is different. I think being different can be a strength, especially for a group like Richemont. Because the capacity to make this quality at this price point is a very specific savoir faire. We may be the only brand in the group able to do it." All the watches are assembled at Baume & Mercier Les Brenets, its watch production atelier located in the Swiss Jura Mountain village of the same name.

THE NEW TEAM is also emphasizing a long-neglected side of Baume & Mercier: its long and sometimes illustrious history. The chronology is a bit complicated but the firm traces its origins to 1830. (For details of its history, go to www.baume-et-mercier.com.) Zimmermann was startled to discover when he arrived at Baume & Mercier headquarters that there are 900 watches in the firm's museum collection. "I said, 'Let me know about the history. What's the heritage?' I wasn't expecting much because I've never heard much about it. And they brought books so big, showing me all the documents. I said, 'OK, show

me your vintage collection.' There were boxes and boxes and boxes and boxes. I said, 'Guys, this is amazing. This is a treasure. That's exactly the thing a brand can't buy. Either you have it or you don't. So why not take advantage of it? Let's really get inspired.'"

And they did. As noted, they adapted designs from museum pieces to create the new Hampton and Capeland collections. Says Zimmermann, "Museum pieces will be the source of designs for the next 20 years."

The Hampton collection provides another key element of the B&M comeback plan: the new brand identity. "The Hampton collection is at the heart of Baume & Mercier's new universe," the company says in its promotional material. Its marketing materials identify the brand with the luxurious, casual lifestyle associated with the famous Hamptons at the tip of New York's Long Island. "Seaside living in the Hamptons is the theme of the brand," Zimmermann says. (It was in the process of developing this marketing plank that Rupert suggested Schalk Burger's "Life is about moments" line that is the brand's slogan.) Here Zimmermann is taking a page out of his and Kern's IWC playbook, augmenting the product story with a heavy dose of lifestyle marketing, something Baume & Mercier previously lacked.

It will take time for Baume & Mercier to recover. "How long it's going to take — three years — I don't know," Rupert told the financial analysts. But it's clear he's in it for the long haul. Fans of the brand (it had 190,612 Facebook followers as of September 20) will be heartened to know that it has made an encouraging start. Asked why Richemont's watch division had such strong sales in April, Lepeu credited "the B&M situation." "B&M has launched its new products," he said, and they helped to bolster the figures for the month.



## Vatchest

A record number of watch aficionados saw a record number of watches and watch brands at WatchTime's New York "Inside Basel/Geneva" event.

PHOTOS BY ARNALDO STUDIO

atchTime "Inside Basel/Geneva" reached new milestones at the New York City event held on September 27. More than 300 people and 29 watch exhibitors participated in the event, which was held at New York's Grand Hyatt hotel.

WatchTime launched the Inside Basel/Geneva events six years ago in conjunction with noted watch collector and expert Jeff Kingston. The events consist of two parts. First is a two-hour cocktail reception where aficionados get to see and touch new watches from the exhibiting watch brands. Following that is a sitdown dinner during which Kingston offers a multi-media review of the top watches from the Baselworld, SIHH and Geneva Time Exhibition shows.

In New York, attendees were able to examine watches from the following brands, all of which are *manufactures*, making at least one original movement in house: A. Lange and Söhne, Armin Strom, Blancpain, Breguet, Bulgari, Carl



Aficionados talk watches with watchmakers Kari Voutilainen (left in the photo above) and Roland Murphy of RGM Watches (far right in the photo to the right).







More than 300 people attended Watch Time's "Inside Basel/Geneva" event in New York.





EVENTS
Inside Basel/Geneva New York















During dinner, noted watch expert Jeff Kingston reviewed the top watches he saw at the Swiss shows.

F. Bucherer, Cartier, De Bethune, Girard-Perregaux, Glashütte Original, Hautlence, H. Moser & Cie., IWC, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Kari Voutilainen, Ladoire, Laurent Ferrier, Montblanc, Panerai, Parmigiani, Peter Speake-Marin, Piaget, Rebellion, RGM, Roger Dubuis, Romain Gauthier, Vacheron Constantin and Zenith. A representative from the watchauction house Antiquorum was also on hand to talk with guests.

In addition to New York, IBG events were held this year in Chicago, Miami, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

"We are gratified by the support for the shows shown by our readers and the watch brands," said WatchTime publisher Wolfgang Blum. "Attendees tell us they love the event because they get unique insight and analysis by Jeff Kingston. Plus they see more watches from each brand than they ever see in a jewelry store. These include many limited-edition watches and even unique pieces. And they see more brands. Last but not least, they get to meet well-known watchmakers like Kari Voutilainen, Roland Murphy, Peter Speake-Marin and Romain Gauthier. It has turned out to be a winning formula."







acheron Constantin introduced the Quai de l'Île in 2008, touting it as the world's first customizable line of luxury watches. Its modular, building-block system enables prospective buyers to visit one of Vacheron's retailers and use a portable monitor to view mockups of various combinations of two dials and a wide variety of case components in different materials to create their own personalized watch. (You can also configure a watch on Vacheron's website.) The first Quai de l'Ile models were a three-handed watch with date display and another version with date, day and power-reserve displays. This year, the company added an annual calendar with retrograde indicators, and began offering, for all three models, simpler, opaque dials in addition to the transparent sapphire dials on the first generation.

Juggling all the potential permutations of functions, dials, case materials and straps results in approximately 700 conceivable variations in the current collection. (The total number would have been even larger if Vacheron Constantin hadn't prohibited certain combinations of case materials for aesthetic reasons.)

Our tested watch, the full name of which is the Quai de l'Ile Automatic Day Date Bi-Color, is equipped with the newer dial. For the case, we chose a combination of rose gold and titanium; the other material available is the silvery-white precious metal palladium. Materials can be combined because each Quai de l'Ile case consists of three subassemblies, each of whose parts are made of the same material. These three sections are the bezel; the lugs, including the add-on between them and the bottom ring; and the flanks and rearward base plate.

On this watch, the first and second subassemblies are made of rose gold, and the third is made of titanium. Choosing a titanium or palladium bezel to contrast with the gold lugs would have more strongly highlighted the modular concept, but the new, classically styled dial looks particularly elegant with a front made entirely of rose gold.

Another notable feature of the firstgeneration Quai de l'Ile models was their protection against counterfeiting. The sapphire dials have a sunburst pattern that is visible under ultraviolet light and minuscule type that is discernible through a watchmaker's loupe. To make life even more difficult for copycats, the dials are coated on both their surfaces with transparent anti-counterfeiting foils similar to those integrated into Swiss bank notes. Vacheron Constantin uses a pattern of tiny Maltese crosses (the brand's logo) for the lower foil. The upper one bears 60 rays that emanate from the dial's center and continue to its periphery, where they serve as minute indices.

The elaborate anti-counterfeiting protection is effective and technically interesting, but it probably isn't much of a concern for potential purchasers of the Quai de l'Ile because the watch has such a highly complex case that it would be very difficult for a copycat to construct a fake that would be good enough to fool a buyer. With this in mind, Vacheron Constantin chose to curtail these safety measures in the new, more elegant generation of dials, leaving only the UV-luminescent sunburst, which is positioned between 4 o'clock and 5 o'clock on the dial of our tested watch.

**ASIDE FROM ITS** ability to be customized and its protection against counterfeiting, the watch is well crafted, its design is attractive, and it's powered by a handsome, solidly constructed *manufacture* movement. But how does this wristwatch look and feel on the wrist and how does it perform in everyday use?

Surely, the first thing the purchaser of a Quai de l'Ile Automatic Day Date Bi-Color will scrutinize after removing it from its box will be its case, which of course was created with his personal in-

#### Pros

- + Modular case concept
- + Very good craftsmanship
- + Beautiful *manufacture* movement

## Cons

- High price
- A tool is needed to set the day and date
- Irregular rate results

# **SPECS**

# VACHERON CONSTANTIN QUAI DE L'ILE AUTOMATIC DAY DATE

**Manufacturer:** Vacheron Constantin, Chemin du Tourbillon 10, CH-1228 Plan-les-Ouates, Switzerland

Reference number: X85IOP2A

**Functions:** Hours, minutes, seconds; day and date; power-reserve display; stop-seconds function

**Movement:** Self-winding *manufacture* Caliber 2475 SC/1; 28,800 vph; 27 jewels; index adjusted via setting screw; Glucydur balance; Kif shock absorption; 40-hour power reserve; diameter = 26.2 mm; height = 5.7 mm

Case: Rose gold and titanium, highly domed sapphire crystal with nonreflective treatment on both its surfaces, fully threaded caseback made of rose gold with sapphire window, water-resistant to 30 meters

**Strap and clasp:** Hand-sewn, cut alligator-leather with secure rose-gold folding clasp

#### Rate results

(Deviations in seconds per 24 hours):

Dial up	-1
Dial down	+5
Crown up	-7
Crown down	+6
Crown left	0
Crown right	-6
Greatest deviation of rate	13
Average deviation:	-0.5
Mean amplitude:	
Flat positions	281°
Hanging positions	263°

**Dimensions:** Diameter = 41 x 50.5 mm, height = 13.5 mm, weight = 130 g

**Variations:** Other dial and case combinations available (\$39,900-\$49,900)

Price: \$48,700



put. Among the first things he'll notice about the case are the diverse forms and finishes of its individual components. Screws pierce the lugs, which boast steps and accentuated edges; on the flanks, two edges extend above the satin-finished middle piece; and the fully threaded back rises three-dimensionally from the rearward base plate. The highly domed sapphire crystal harmoniously continues the attractive curvature of the case. The pretty alternation between polished and satin-finished surfaces is especially striking on such a complex case.

After the new owner has given the case a full once-over, he'll probably examine the dial, which has several layers and has a partly brushed, matte surface. The numerals and indices that mark the hours have beveled and polished edges and longitudinally satin-finished surfaces. Fine satin finishing graces the two luminous hands for the hours and minutes, as well as the non-luminescent seconds hand and the three smaller additional hands, which indicate the date, day and remaining power reserve. Most of the displays on this excellently crafted dial are easy to read, but the date isn't quite up to snuff: a small hand-type date display, in which every other numeral from 1 to 31 is skipped, is always difficult to read, but this one is also missing a numeral for the 23rd of each month, so the wearer is apt to be somewhat unsure about the dates between the 21st and the 25th. The date and day can be reset by pressing the tip of a little wand (delivered with the watch) against two corrector buttons in the case's flanks. Using the crown for this process would surely have been more convenient, especially since the Quai de

### **SCORES**

#### VACHERON CONSTANTIN QUAI DE L'ILE DAY DATE

**Strap and clasp (max. 10 points):** The cut alligator-leather strap and the massive gold clasp are very well made. **10** 

**Operation (5):** Operating the crown is problem-free, but corrector buttons and a wand are needed to reset the additional displays.

Case (10): Exciting construction and very good craftsmanship, but the case is only moderately water-resistant (30 meters) 9

Design (15): The second-generation opaque dial contributes to a classical overall appearance, to which the titanium flanks add a modern touch.

**Legibility (5):** With the exception of the small hand-type date display, all indicators are easily legible.

Wearing comfort (10): Highly comfortable on the wrist, but putting this watch on and taking it off are a bit clumsy. Due to its construction, the clasp is difficult to open and to adjust to fit the wearer's wrist.

Movement (20): Caliber 2475 SC/1 is a solidly built, beautifully decorated, self-winding movement with the Geneva Seal. Its styling is partly classical and partly modern, and that's a good match for this watch.

Rate results (10): Our timing machine calculated a very minimal daily loss, but the greatest difference among the various positions was very high and the watch lost time on the wrist.

Overall value (15): Despite its many strong points, the watch's price is quite high. 10

TOTAL: 80 POINTS



THE PRETTY ALTERNATION BETWEEN
POLISHED AND SATIN-FINISHED SURFACES IS
PARTICULARLY STRIKING ON THE QUAI DE
L'ILE'S COMPLEX, MODULAR CASE.



The gold, doublefolding clasp has an asymmetrical design and is very sturdy. l'Ile's crown is easy to extract and turn.

However, the upside of having the buttons is that the crown is simpler, pulling out only to the position used to set the time. Setting the watch is easy and precise because the movement has a stop-seconds function. A little spring stops the balance when the crown is pulled out. That's only one of the many advantages of *manufacture* Caliber 2475 SC/1, which the Quai de l'Île's owner can examine through the transparent pane of sapphire in the watch's caseback. The

beautiful, self-winding movement has a Glucydur balance and a classical architecture of bridges and cocks. The decorations are also traditional, with rhodiumplated surfaces, beveled and polished edges, Geneva waves, cloud patterns and golden engravings. Unobstructed views of the entire winding mechanism and of the springs and levers that comprise the stop-seconds mechanism are highlights for aficionados of mechanical timekeeping. As proof of especially high-quality construction and outstanding embellishment, the movement is marked with the Geneva Hallmark, which is unostentatiously engraved, without golden filling,

CALIBER 2475 SC/1 has a modern look, particularly on its ruthenium-coated (and therefore noticeably darker) 22k-gold rotor with semicircular ribs and trapezoidal piercings. The rotor is one element in the movement's attractively contradictory character, also reflected in the watch's exterior, which combines a classical front with a comparatively high-tech, modular case. The rotor's cutouts are inspired by the notches on the back of the case. The rotor winds the mainspring in only one direction of rotation, and with extraordinary efficiency: just a few minutes after putting on this watch in the morning, it has already amassed its maximum power reserve of 40 hours.

When the owner is finally ready to slip the Quai de l'Ile onto his wrist, he'll need a bit of patience. First he has to use a screwdriver to loosen the setting screw on the inside of the heavy, no-nonsense double-folding clasp, then find the cor-





THE GREATEST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TWO POSITIONS WAS 13 SECONDS.
THE WATCH LOST AN AVERAGE OF 3.5 SECONDS PER DAY ON THE WRIST.

rect hole in the strap, and finally retighten the screw. Unfortunately, while this process makes for added security, it sacrifices ease of operation, because the owner cannot change the strap's length without reaching for a tool.

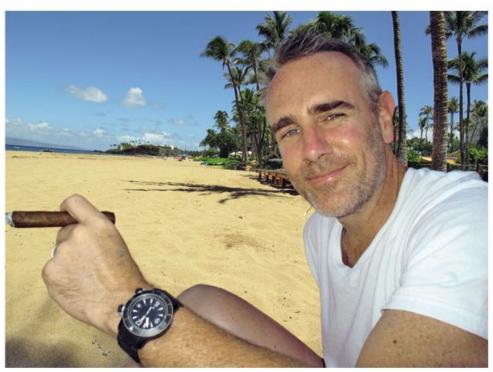
The gold clasp is notable not only because of its very stable architecture and the brand's large, halved logo on its outer stirrup, but also thanks to its asymmetrical construction. The wing that bears the closing stirrup and the buttons to open the clasp is longer than the opposite wing. The buttons function reliably, but unfortunately (as a result of their construction) they only open the longer wing. This means that the wearer must forcibly pull open the short wing much the way he would a folding clasp without opener buttons. Vacheron Constantin claims that this system improves the resistance to theft: if both wings could be opened at the push of a button, a thief could surreptitiously slip the watch off its wearer's wrist.

The watch's strap is of the same high level of quality as the clasp. (The watch we tested and photographed was outfitted with an embossed cowhide-leather strap rather than the alligator-leather one used on commercial models; Vacheron sent the alligator-leather strap separately.) The real McCoy is hand-sewn and fully glued, and its surface is lightly coated with glossy lacquer. If one wanted to make a good item even better, one would have to bend the upper leather and the edges and then stitch through them from below, but the high-quality, cut and lacquered edges look quite good and are indisputably well crafted.

AS FAR AS THE WATCH'S movement goes, its rate performance unfortunately did not hold up to its high-quality craftsmanship. Our timing machine calculated a theoretical average with only a minimal deviation of -0.5 second, but the greatest difference between two positions was fully 13 seconds, which is much too high, and the watch lost an average of 3.5 seconds per day on the wrist. This is certainly not the fault of the index's fine adjustment, which uses a setting screw: such mechanisms can make effective fine adjusting very easy. Nonetheless, we would have preferred here the more elegant solution of a fine regulation mechanism without an index — that is, one with a freely oscillating hairspring and with weights on the balance.

On the other hand, the very slight decline in the angular arc of the balance between flat positions and hanging positions was a pleasant surprise. This suggests that the moving parts in the movement, especially the pivots of the gears in the train, generate little friction in the hanging positions, meaning that they've been very exactly positioned and/or meticulously post-processed.

Along with the test model's irregular rate, the only other serious criticism of the Quai de l'Ile is its high price: \$48,700 is a lot to ask for a watch, even one with a *manufacture* movement that is also well crafted and offers interesting additional functions. However, it's worth pointing out that the ability to personalize the watch might still make it a very good deal for a fan of mechanical timekeeping who craves a truly individual luxury item.



While on a summer holiday in Maui, Matthew Post enjoys some leisure time with his Jaeger-LeCoultre Master Compressor Navy SEALs Limited Edition.

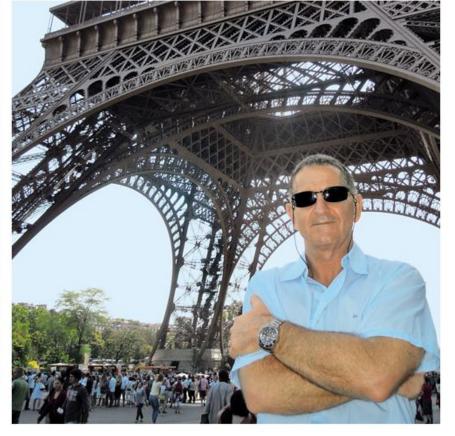


Scuba dive team members George Plater (left, James Bond Omega Planet Ocean) and Bill Coffman (Sean Connery-style 1961 Rolex Submariner) come prepared for the job.

A birthday celebration brings Michael Diner, sporting his Rolex Sea-Dweller, from South Africa to the Eiffel Tower.



Steve Albright displays his Glashütte Original Sport Evolution as he lands a fat, brown trout on the Provo river in Utah.





Family members gather in Maryland (l-r): Patrick Bray, Rolex Submariner; Fred Fuchs, Zenith El Primero Chronomaster Open; Caitlin Bray, Rolex Oyster Perpetual Datejust; Peter Fuchs, Bell & Ross BR 01-92

Greg Sroka shares his passion for watches with his sons Gunnar (left) and Keifer. Gunnar sports a 1983 Rolex Submariner, Greg a Panerai Luminor PAM 250 Daylight and Keifer a vintage 1959 Rolex Datejust.



At the World Dragon Boat Races in Florida, coach and paddler Mike Gaughan wears his Panerai PAM 00124 while posing with a dragon sculpture.



Good friends Scott Shapiro (left) and Rob Rush attend a Furthur Concert in Philadelphia in, respectively, a Patek Philippe Ref. 5000) and Panerai Luminor GMT.





The Bonner family spends some quality time in Destin, Florida (l-r):
Adrienne (Cyma Imperium LS and TAG Heuer Aquaracer Two-Tone);
Valerie (Maurice Lacroix Classique); Cameron (Omega Seamaster);
and Derek (Breitling Avenger Seawolf, left arm, and TAG Heuer
Aquaracer Day-Date Chronograph, right arm).

To submit a photo, please send your image to photo@watchtime.com with a short description identifying each person in the photo and the watch each one is wearing. Please give the first and last name of the wearer and the brand and model of the watch. If the photo was taken at an event, please specify when and where it was held. Only clear images in which both the face of the watch and the wearer are visible will be considered for publication. Images must be in JPEG format and no smaller than 1 MB. Only the best-quality and most interesting photos will be considered.

# Rolex and Tiger: It's About Time

n October 5, the day Rolex announced it had signed Tiger Woods to a sponsorship deal starting January 1, I happened to have dinner with some savvy watch executives and collectors. The consensus was that Rolex had lost its mind. "What were they thinking?" the group moaned. "Tiger stinks! He's washed up! He's a moral reprobate! He's toxic!"

To which I say "Bollocks!" (a lovely British expression for "That's complete crap.") This should have happened a decade ago. Some of you may remember that when the young Eldrick Tont Woods descended on the pro tour from golf Olympus, the first watch company to negotiate a sponsorship deal with him was Rolex. But Rolex whacked its opening shot in the Tiger sweepstakes into the rough, signing him not for the big brand, but for Tudor, Rolex's inconsequential little sister. I thought then the move was weird. It was clear that Woods was a phenom destined for superstardom. Why waste him on Tudor? Giving Rolex the benefit of the doubt, Woods was young and Rolex was trying to promote Tudor to a younger demographic. It didn't work. Rolex ended up pulling Tudor from the U.S. market.

The story went from weird to weirder when Rolex shanked its next shot clear off the course. Instead of promoting Woods to its large team of Rolexbrand golf "ambassadors," they let him get away. In 2002, Rolex wannabe TAG Heuer signed Woods to a multi-year, bigbucks deal. TAG's coup raised inevitable questions. "Why Rolex relegated the golf god to Tudor, then lost him to the competition, mystifies the watch gang," I wrote in this space in 2003. "Why, they ask, was Woods unworthy of a Rollie? Because he wasn't as good as, say, Fred Couples, who appears in Rolex commercials now? Do the Swiss not watch golf?"



Rolex's new ambassador

Now, after double bogeying on Woods, Rolex has surprised the world by taking another shot in the Tiger sponsorship game. Is it a stroke of genius or another shank? Everybody seems to have an opinion. You are about to get mine

But first, a quickie quiz: What do Phil Mickelson, Luke Donald, Rickie Fowler, Retief Goosen, Paul Casey, Adam Scott, Martin Kaymer, Camilo Villegas, and Matteo Manassero have in common? Right: they are all professional golfers. Very good. But what else? Don't know? All 10 are Rolex ambassadors, along with what Rolex calls the Big Three (Palmer, Nicklaus and Player) and Tom Watson — which to my mind constitutes a Big Four. But I digress. No argument that Rolex fields a formidable team of golf ambassadors. The only competition is from Audemars Piguet, which has eight golfers as ambassadors: Greame Mc-Dowell, Rory McIlroy, Darren Clarke, Lee Westwood, Ian Poulter, Miguel Angel Jiménez, Vijay Singh, and Anthony Kim. (Wouldn't you love to see a Ryder-Cuplike competition pitting the Rolex ambassadors against the AP ambassadors? But, again, I digress.)

Rolex's ambassador team has won a total of eight of golf's coveted "major" tournaments, four of them by Mickelson. (That doesn't include the Big Three, who are retired, and Watson, who plays on the senior tour.) For the record, the collective total of Team Audemars Piguet is six, three by Singh.

Tiger Woods has won 14 majors. Math whizzes out there will already have calculated that Woods has won as many majors as the 18 golf stars on the Rolex and AP teams combined.

Rolex's slogan is "a crown for every achievement." In the history of golf, only one man has achieved more than Tiger Woods. Am I surprised that Rolex has signed the injured, flawed, humbled, struggling, 35-year-old Tiger Woods to a sponsorship deal? Not at all. What surprises me still is that Rolex did not do it when he was 25 and under contract with them. That move I will never understand. This one makes perfect sense to me. Rolex gets golf's biggest draw, destined perhaps to be its greatest player ever, the single most recognized athlete in the world, with a multi-ethnic ancestry that is demographic gold for global marketing, etc., etc., etc. In the process, Rolex remedies the blunders of a previous regime and returns the favor to TAG Heuer, who tweaked them in the Tiger sweepstakes a decade ago. (TAG dropped Woods back in July in the wake of his sex scandal.)

The big play here is that no matter what Woods does going forward, Rolex has secured for all time its roster of golf legends who have worn (albeit for pay) the watch that bears the crown. The Big Four — Jack, Arnold, Gary and Tiger — will appear in Rolex commercials that will run for as long as they play the game.





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